



INDIAN STUDENT SHOT DEAD IN CANADA
A 24-year-old Indian man who went to Canada in 2022 to pursue higher education was shot dead in his car in Vancouver city, police said on Sunday. The Vancouver Police Department said officers were called to the scene around 11 pm on April 12 after residents heard the sound of gunshots. Chirag Antil was found deceased inside a vehicle in the area, police said. No arrests have been made and the investigation remains ongoing, the police said. **IP13**

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Format C-2						
Declaration about criminal antecedents of candidates set up by the party						
(As per the judgment dated 25th September, 2018 of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation &Ors. Vs. Union of India &Anr.)						
Name of Political Party : BHARATIYAJANATAPARTY						
* Name of Election : GENERAL ELECTIONS TO LOKASABHA 2024						
Name of State/ UT : KARNATAKA						
1.	2	3	4		5.	
Sl. No.	Name of candidate	Name of constituency	Pending criminal cases		Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences	
			Name of Court, Case No. & status of the case(s)	Sections of the Acts concerned & brief description of offence(s)	Name of Court & date (s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed
1	BRIJESH CHOWTA	PC- 17, DAKSHINA KANNADA PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY	JMFC NANJANAGUDU CC No.199/2018 Pending before the HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA, BENGALURU in CrI.P. 2675/2024	Section 127-A and 133 of the RP Act. Restrictions on the printing of pamphlets, posters and penalty for illegal hiring or procuring of conveyance at elections.	Nil	Nil
2	V.SOMANNA	PC-No.19, Tumkur Parliamentary Constituency	PCR No. 31/2013 Hon'ble Additional City Civil &Session judge, Bangalore City, CCH 82 (CrI. Pet. No.11549/ 2022 reserved for orders in High Court of Karnataka, Bengaluru)	Offence under Sec. 13(1) (b)(d)& (e) R/W Section 13(2) of P.C.Act, Karnataka Lokayuktha)	NIL	NIL
3	KUMARI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE	PC- 24, BANGALORE NORTH PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY	1. CC No. 45/2024 24th ACMM Bengaluru Pending	Sec.123(3), 123(3A), 125 of RP Act Allegation of inflammatory speech and scandalous allegations against particular state	Nil	Nil
			2. CR.No. 24/2024, Madhurai City Police Station, Tamilnadu. Pending	Sec. 153, 153A, 505(1)(B), 505 (2) of IPC Allegation of inflammatory speech and scandalous allegations against particular state	Nil	Nil
			3. CC No.37087/2021 42 nd ACMM. Bengaluru	Sec. 499 & 500 of IPC Alleged defamation of Sowmya Reddy	Nil	Nil
			4. CR.No.33/2020 JMFC Tirur. Pending Investigarion	Sec.153A & 34 of IPC Alleged inflammatory speech	Nil	Nil
			5. Spl.CC 124/2014 CCH 82, Bengaluru, PENDING TRIAL	Sec. 45(1) of PMLA R/w. Sec 200 of Cr.PC for offences under Sec 3 & 4 of PMLA Alleged that money is invested in shell company and alleged money laundering	Nil	Nil
4	P.C.Mohan	PC- 25, BANGALORE CENTRAL PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY	1.Cr.No.50/2024 Halasuru Gate P.S, Hon'ble 6 th ACMM, Bengaluru Stayed in Karnataka High Court in CrI.P.2771/2024	1.Section 143, 149, 188, 283, 290 AND 268 Of IPC. Alleged unlawful assembly, disobedience to order lawfully made by public servant, causing obstruction in public way & public nuisance Carrying out protest in a place other than the designated place as per the licensing and regulation of protests, demonstrations and protest marches (Bengaluru City) order, 2021 under section 31(1)(o) of the Karnataka Police Act, 1963	NIL	NIL
			2.PCR No.46/2019 – CH 82, Hon'ble Addl. City Civil & Sessions Judge (Spl Court), Bengaluru –Presently transferred 42 nd ACMM Bengalru and Renumbered as 19837/2021. Awaiting further orders from Supreme Court of India in SLP (CrI) No. 1475/2021	Secs. 171G, 177, 181, 191,193,199 And 200 of IPC. Alleged Suppression about immovable Property before the RO in 2014 & 2019 General Elections, Allegedly giving false information, making false statement on oath or affirmation to public servant	NIL	NIL

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Public at large are hereby informed that our client, Heena Imtiaz Pasha, W/o Imtiaz Pasha, Aged about 54 Years, Residing at Survey No.199/3CA, Industrial Area, Near Polavaram Right Canal, Surampalli, Krishna, Andhra Pradesh-52222 had purchased the schedule property under registered Sale Deed dated 17/01/2014, registered on 19/01/2014, as Document No.8NS-1-20391-2023-24, at 896-1, before the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Baraswadi, Bangalore.

We state that our clients while shifting her residence had lost all the original documents pertaining to the Schedule Property such as Sale Deed dated 13/07/1995 registered as Document No.3413/95, at Book I, Volume No.1147, before the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Bangalore. Affidavit dated 15/05/1999 executed by Mr.Henry Peter Furhede and Mrs.JacintaFurhede, Power of Attorney dated 15/05/1999 executed by Mr.Henry Peter and Mrs. Jacinta in favour of Smt.Uma, Copy of the Tax Paid Receipt for the year 2023-2024 and few other related documents pertaining to the said property.

Therefore, Public at Large hereby informed about the loss of the original documents and not to deal with the said property without our clients consent in any manner and public at large are requested to return back or intimate the same to our clients if the original documents are traced.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel bearing House List Shatha No.71/1-5, situated at Brattis Village, Bidarahalihobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Now comes under the jurisdiction of BBMP Limits, Bangalore, measuring East to West 60 Feet and North to South 60 Feet, totally measuring 3600 Sq.Ft. East by Private Property West by: Private Property North by: Private Property South by: 25 Feet Wide Road.

Asad K. (Bar 1980) Advocate, No. 59/2, 6th Cross, Mattikeri, Bengaluru-560054. Mo: 9845683645

Indian Bank

Corporate Office: Estate Dept. 254-260, Aravali Shanganagalli, Chennai. Tel: 044-2613 4401 / 4619

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

INDIAN BANK invites applications in two bid system (Technical and Price bid) for selection of Interior / Civil Contractor for the proposed Civil, Interior Furnishing etc. works in Flat No.2 & 3 at IMAGE Executive Quarters, MRC Nagar Chennai-28.

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Asst. General Manager (P&E)

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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is an information to the General Public that my clients SHRIRANJINI.S., W/o Padigar Anantash Tantry & PADIGAR ANANTESH TANTRY, S/o Padigar Narasimha, Both residing at No. 78/A, Ground Floor, Govindappa Road, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru-560004, have entered into an agreement of Sale for purchase of Schedule property/Flat from its owners a) R. SRIDHAR, S/o late R Radhakrishna Setty, b) R. SRINIVAS, S/o late R Radhakrishna Setty, c) R. LALITHA, W/o late R. Ramaprakash, and d) C.R. SRKANTH, S/o late R. Ramaprakash, All are Residing at No-42, H.B.Sameja Road, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru-560 004. Any person's, institutions or tanks having any right, share, claim or objection to the proposed purchase may file their objections in writing along with copies of supporting documents within 10 days from the date of this publication to the purchaser's advocate at below mentioned address, failing which my clients will be advised to go ahead and complete the formalities for registration of the sale deed in respect of the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

(Description of the Apartment)

A Three Bed Room residential apartment bearing Flat No.42/A, New Property No.42/A, PID No.50-27-42/4, in the Second Floor (Eastern Portion), constructed on the Schedule 'A' Property, Situated at HB Sameja Road, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru measuring 2453 square feet of Super Built up area and 586 square feet of Undivided share, rights, title, interest and ownership in and over the Schedule 'A' Property, with proportionate rights in common areas, stair case, passages etc., together with one Covered Car and Two Wheeler parking in the 5th Floor.

R.R.Upadhyaya, Advocate
RAVISHANKAR ASSOCIATES,
#92, 2nd Main Road, Between 7th & 8th Cross, Chamrajpet, Bangalore -18 Mob: 9241102941

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(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)
(एक सिनियरल कंपनी / A Miniratna Company)
(भारत सरकार का उपक्रम / A Government of India Undertaking)

NOTICE

All the tenders* issued by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of BCCL www.bcclweb.in, Coal India Limited (CIL) e-procurement portal <https://coalindiatenders.nic.in> and Central Public Procurement Portal <https://eprocure.gov.in>. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM Portal <https://gem.gov.in>.

*This is applicable to all Open (Domestic / Global) Tenders issued through e-procurement portal of CIL.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is hereby informed that our client intends to acquire the property described in the **Schedule** below ("**Schedule Property**") owned by Dr. Deepak V Rao and his wife Dr. Shalini Rao, residing at No. 3294, 12th 'A' Main, HAL II Stage, Indiranagar, Bengaluru – 560008 ("**Owners**"). The Owners have represented that (i) they are the absolute owners of the Schedule Property with each holding equal undivided interest in the Schedule Property and (ii) they have unrestricted rights of alienation over the same.

Public is notified that any person claiming to have any manner of right, title, claim, benefit, demand or interest in the Schedule Property or any portion thereof, by way of sale, gift, lease, mortgage or in any other manner, may lodge his objections and/or claims in writing, along with supporting documents to the undersigned within **fifteen (15) days** from the date of this notice. If no such claim is received, it would be deemed that no person, except the Owners, has any right or interest in the Schedule Property and claim/s, if any, which are not notified as stated above will be deemed to have been waived.

Schedule

The land bearing New Municipal Khata No. 3294, having Property Identification No. PID 72-1-3294 (formerly Site No. 3294) measuring 3,340.11 sq. ft. together with residential building consisting of basement with three (3) car parking space, ground floor, first floor and second floor having total built up area of 4,000 sq. ft. situated at HAL II Stage, Indiranagar, Bengaluru which is bounded on its:

East by : Site bearing No. 3294/B;
West by : Road;
North by : Site bearing No. 3293/B; and
South by : Road.

Signed/-
R Vasudev / B S Raghavi
Magnah Law Partners
No. 1/24, Hanumanthappa Layout
Ulsoor Road, Bengaluru - 560042
Phone No. 080-46462424
Email ID: raghavi.bs@magnahlaw.com

Date:15-04-2024

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD
O/o Chief General Manager (Engg), Transmission Circle, Khairatabad, Hyderabad-04, T.S.

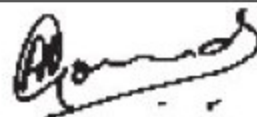
e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTIFICATION

e-Tender Notice No. & Date	Name of Work	Ranging (approx.)	Bid document download start date
EP No.03,04,05,06, 07 & 08 /CGM(E)/ TC / T3 / Tankers / O&M Div.XXI / 2024-25, Dt: 08.04.2024.	M.S & D of 5 KL capacity MS water tanker shell fabricated with 6mm thick MS plate including necessary fixtures for HMWS / SB, CSD at Hydernagar for the requirement of O&M Division No III, XV, IX, XVIII, VI and all other divisions for future demand of tanker under O&M Dn XXI, Control Room.	Rs. 85.84 Lakhs Rs. 85.84 Lakhs Rs. 85.84 Lakhs Rs. 85.84 Lakhs Rs. 197.45 Lakhs	15.04.2024 @ 02.00pm

The Tenderers are requested to upload the information on the Zip format preferably. Further details can be seen on www.eprocurement.gov.in.

Sd/- Chief General Manager (Engg), Transmission Circle, Khairatabad, Hyderabad-04, T.S.

5	LS TEJASVI SURYA	PC – 26 BANGALORE SOUTH	1. FIR (CRIME) No. 51/2024 , HALARURU GATE PS, BANGALORE (Dt. 20.03.2024) 6 th ACMM, Bengaluru. Stayed by Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka Bengaluru in CrI. P. No.2772/2024	Sec. 153A, 295a of IPC, and Sec. 123(3A) of the RP Act, 1950,1951, 1989 Promoting enmity between classes and maliciously insulting the religion or religious belief of any class.	Nil	Nil
			2. FIR (CRIME) No. 50/2024 , HALARURU GATE PS, BANGALORE (Dt. 19.03.2024) 6 th ACMM, Bengaluru. Stayed by Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka Bengaluru in CrI. P. No.2773/2024	Sections 143, 149, 188, 283, 290 & 268 of IPC Unlawful assembly, Disobedience to Orderlawfully made by Public Servant, Causing obstruction in Public way and Public nuisance	Nil	Nil
			3. FIR No. 200/2022At Civil Lines PS, New Delhi dt. (30.03.2024) C R Case No. 12/2022 At Rouse Avenue Courts, NewDelhi Stayed by Hon'ble Delhi High Court of in CrI. M.C. No.3867/2023	Sections 143, 147, 149, 186, 188, 332, 353 of IPC Unlawful assembly, Rioting, Obstruction Public Servant, Disobedience to Order lawfully made by Public Servant, voluntarily causing hurt, assault to deter public Servant	Nil	Nil
6	Dr. K. SUDHAKAR	PC –27 Chikkaballapur	CC 35460/2022 Before 42 nd ACMM, Spl. Court.	Sections 499, 500 501 R/w. Sec.34 of IPC Defamation.		
			Pending in CrI. Pet. No. 1055/2023, before the Karnataka High Court, Bengaluru.			


Lokesh Ambekallu
(State Office Secretary)
Bharatiya Janata Party - Karnataka



**TMC SAYS ABHISHEK'S
CHOPPER SEARCHED,
BJP HITS BACK**

The Trinamool Congress on Sunday said its general secretary Abhishek Banerjee's helicopter was raided by Income Tax officials in Kolkata's Behala flying club and alleged this was a part of a ploy by the BJP to harass and intimidate opposition candidates whom they cannot engage with politically. The BJP hit back, saying the TMC leaders were apprehensive about their ill-gotten wealth. **Ip9**

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75

16

10

06

02

03 STUDENTS WITHIN TOP 10 STATE RANKS

**State
7th
Rank**

K	098
E	098
P	100
C	100
M	098
B	098

**592
98.67%**



**State
8th
Rank**

K	099
E	094
P	100
C	100
M	098
B	100

**591
98.50%**



**State
10th
Rank**

K	095
E	096
P	100
C	100
M	098
B	100

**589
98.17%**



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 587-97.83% ADITYA	 587-97.83% RAKSHITA	 587-97.83% VARUN	 586-97.67% AKSHATA	 586-97.67% SUSHMITA	 585-97.50% SANJANA	 584-97.33% ARYAN	 582-97.00% PRAJAPATI	 581-96.83% SANGANABASAVA	 580-96.67% SANDESH	 579-96.50% ADARSH	 579-96.50% SHRUTI
 579-96.50% SHASHWATH	 579-96.50% PRAGATI	 578-96.33% ADINATH	 577-96.17% PRATIKSHA	 576-96.00% ADITYA GANGA	 576-96.00% K G HARSHITHA	 576-96.00% KIRAN KUMAR	 576-96.00% RAVIKIRAN	 576-96.00% PRAJWAL	 576-96.00% PRAJWAL	 575-95.83% AKSHATA	 575-95.83% SUMEET
 575-95.83% VEERESH	 574-95.67% PRAJWAL	 574-95.67% PRAJWAL	 574-95.67% SANATH	 574-95.67% SHARAN PRIYA	 573-95.50% AKASH ADIKI	 573-95.50% ANJALI	 573-95.50% SOUNDARYA	 573-95.50% VEERENDRA	 573-95.50% PREETI	 573-95.50% VISHWA	 573-95.50% SAKSHI
 573-95.50% VINAYAK	 572-95.33% ABHISHEK RAO	 572-95.33% AKSHATA	 572-95.33% BHAGYASHRI	 572-95.33% SNEHAL	 572-95.33% VIRESH	 572-95.33% SANTOSHI	 572-95.33% VIVEK	 571-95.17% ANKITA	 571-95.17% BHAGYASHREE	 571-95.17% DEEPAK	 571-95.17% RAVEENA
 571-95.17% SHARANABASAVA	 571-95.17% VEERESH	 570-95.00% ANUPAMAJYOTHI	 570-95.00% KEERTI P.	 570-95.00% KAVYA	 570-95.00% MAYURI	 570-95.00% SHIVANI	 570-95.00% SHASHIKALA	 570-95.00% PRARTHANA	 570-95.00% SAINATH	 570-95.00% SIDHANT	 570-95.00% MOHIT

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PUBLIC TOILETS IN BENGALURU DOUBLE RATES FROM ₹5 TO ₹10

Water given in small buckets, extra charge for additional water

RAKSHITH GOWDA @ Bengaluru

WATER scarcity has had an effect on public toilets too in Namma Bengaluru. Next time when you head to a public toilet, carry extra change as those managing them are demanding double the amount.

Till recently, public toilets operated by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), charged visitors Rs 2 for urination and Rs 5 for defecation. But ever since water shortage has hit the city, rates have gone up to Rs 5 and Rs 10 respectively. Also, water is given in small buckets and one has to pay extra for additional water.

Toilet operators blame drying up of borewells and shortage of water for charging extra. They say water tankers have jacked up prices, increasing operational costs of running these public toilets.

A BMTC bus driver said that though the charges have gone up, public toilets continue to be dirty, stinky and unhygienic. Some toilets have stopped bathing services, while others have shut temporarily because of shortage of water, he added.

A person, who operates a public toilet at Majestic, said, "We require three tankers of water per day and the cost of each tanker of water is Rs 5,000. It has impacted our earnings, most of which are being used to cover water expenses."

BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath was not available for comments.



BWSSB Chairman Ram Prasat Manohar inspects the Soladevanahalli pumping station

Soladevanahalli pumping stn to be revived to supply water

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

BANGALORE Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) is all set to revive the historical Soladevanahalli pumping station to pump water to Bengaluru to tide over the water shortage in the city. Soladevanahalli pumping station pumped water from the Hesaraghatta lake across river Arkavathi, which once supplied potable water to several parts of Bengaluru in 1896. Spread over 450 hectares, Hesaraghatta lake was built across river Arkavathi and was supplying water to the city. Since 1998, the lake dried up due to poor inflow and urbanisation and the villagers began using the lakebed as grazing land.

As of now the Hesaraghatta lake, which is around 25 km from the city has 0.3 tmcft of water in it. BWSSB is gearing up to pump the water, treat it at Soladevanahalli pumping station and then pump it to the water reservoir at MEI Layout from where it will be supplied to the needy areas in Bengaluru through tankers.

BWSSB Chairman Ram Prasath Manohar, who visited the pumping station recently, said, "Bengaluru was the first city to have a systematic water supply in the country almost 128 years ago. In the year 1873, through a series of reservoirs known as the Miller's Tanks, water was supplied to Bengaluru. After the great famine that hit the city between 1875-1877, water bodies dried up, which forced the then Diwan of Mysuru, Seshadri Iyer, to channel water from river Arkavathi through Hesaraghatta. As a result, the Soladevanahalli pumping station was set up in the year 1896."

Stating that the water board is taking up measures to supply water to the city in case if there is no rain in the month of May, Manohar said, "Water was pumped from Soladevanahalli pumping station to prevent any famine in Bengaluru. We have directed officials to revive the pumping station by April 20 and supply 0.3 tmcft of water, which is available in the Hesaraghatta lake."

EYE ON THE SKY

No rain for another week in Bengaluru, predicts IMD

RISHITA KHANNA @ Bengaluru

BENGALURU'S rain hopes are dashed once again. Eager city residents, buoyed by predictions of a post-Ugadi downpour, will now have to wait for another week for some relief, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) putting off the likelihood of rain by about a week. The districts of Shivamogga, Hassan and Chikmagalur have come under light rain in the past few days.

Though the temperature is not expected to soar in April, there would be no significant relief either, with the IMD forecasting the mercury to remain around 35-36 degrees Celsius. A Prasad, a senior scientist with IMD, Bengaluru, explained, "Rainfall in Bengaluru is determined by the position of the trough and wind convergence. Currently, there is no wind convergence, and the trough's position is unfavourable, resulting in a delay in rainfall. Bengaluru can expect rainfall if the trough moves eastward in the coming days."

Previously, the IMD forecasted 61.7 mm of rainfall, the typical rate, for Bengaluru in April. However, with the rains reportedly delayed by a few days, the city is anticipated to receive below-normal rainfall levels.

On April 14, the city recorded 34.5 degrees Celsius, a drop of nearly three degrees. Yet, the maximum temperature has remained above 34 degrees Celsius, which is the usual average for Bengaluru in April.

As per the IMD website, the maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be around 35 degrees Celsius and 22 degrees Celsius, respectively, on April 15 and 16.

SBI YFI: 5 out of 9 social entrepreneurs bag ₹45 lakh

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

NUPUR Poharkar, a 28-year-old budding social entrepreneur, has been creating a sustainable impact in the lives of local women using pine needles known for causing forest fires and groundwater table depletion. With her unique approach, Nupur has trained 100 women to make several artefacts like trays, planters, baskets, coasters and fashion accessories, using dried pine leaves. Speaking to TNIE, she said, "Today there are not enough opportunities in villages, we see a lot of migration to urban areas where they do menial jobs and climate change impacts them the most. I wanted to address these problems and so far in two years we have sold 8,000 products under Pirul Handicrafts," Nupur

explained.

Another such individual is Dr Steward Fracian through his SocioDent startup which is focused on building dental innovations for the dependent and disadvantaged individuals in the country. "There are over 20 million individuals in India who are dependent and in need of aid to maintain basic dental hygiene. The product helps people use it easily, with just a click of a button and access different water cycles based on their sensitivity and maintain oral hygiene," Steward said. These sustainable social enterprise pitches were made at SBI Youth for India (YFI) Conclave 2024—the CSR arm of the State Bank group, in the city on Sunday. The event held a live funding round titled 'Sahyog' along with no-

table jury members to analyse their impact on society and raise seed funds for their initiatives. Out of the nine pitches made a total of five received funding of Rs 45 lakhs in total, Rs 9 lakh each. Sanjay Prakash, MD and CEO of SBI Foundation said the youth plays a pivotal role in driving transformative change within the country.

"The projects spearheaded by our fellows have not only accelerated rural development but have also fostered inclusive and sustainable growth across 20 states in the remotest corners of our country." The SBI YFI projects have created an impact in areas such as women empowerment and promoting entrepreneurship in rural India.



MAKING A VISHU WISH

Devotees offer prayers on the occasion of Vishu at Malleswaram in Bengaluru on Sunday | ALLEN EGENUSE J

Water crisis forces migrants to move away from city

RISHITA KHANNA @ Bengaluru

THE acute water shortage Bengaluru has been grappling with is driving migrant workers away from the city.

These labourers, who had settled down at Bellandur's Kariyammanna Agrahara, have been going back to their hometowns or elsewhere as they are unable to pay high amounts for water, both drinking and other necessities.

Water drums are a fixture in front of each shed, where labourers and their families reside. But only 14 out of 40 drums get filled once every three days, said a labourer. Around 60 families of migrant labourers stay here, he added.

The area, apart from bustling IT hubs and high-rise residential buildings, is also home to a large number of migrant workers from West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Assam. But the acute water shortage has forced them to look for livelihood in other cities.

"Throughout Ramadan, we paid Rs 120 each day to get clean water so we could clean ourselves before offering namaz. The taps here are just showpieces and no water has flowed through them in the last two months. The borewells have dried, the price of water for every 10-litre can at RO units

has gone up from Rs 10 to Rs 30 and water tankers have increased their rates from Rs 500 to Rs 1,500 for a 4,000-litre load. Out of 70 families here, around 10 have returned to their hometowns in North India as the money they were sending home was being used to buy water," said Nagma, who hails from Assam and earns Rs 12,000 per month.

Borah, also from Assam and who works as a housekeeper in Bellandur, said, "We can afford to buy water only once a week. The RO unit is open only three times a week. We do not even have sufficient water to boil rice, forget about cooking a

proper meal. There is no piped water supply. Both the landowner and authorities have ignored our problems."

Vijay, 32, a daily wage earner who hails from Howrah in West Bengal, has been staying in the city for over two years. "I moved here because I get around Rs 1,100, compared to just Rs 750 in my hometown. I have two kids aged 5 and 8. Every other day, we have to pay for water. How can we reduce consumption? We compromised on baths and laundry. But still, being a family of five, we need at least 40 litres of drinking water every week. The RO unit is just a few metres away but it is not operational the whole day."

PRAVEEN KUMAR @ Bengaluru

A family of five on its way to a temple near Mandya for Ugadi, was attacked and robbed by miscreants on a bike. The incident took place on the festival night, around 1 am on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway, between Lambani Tandya and Devarahosahalli.

The accused smashed the windshield and the car window, used pepper spray, and attacked one of the family members with a machete.

Mahendra Mahadev (29), a resident of Manjunath Layout, Marathahalli, filed a complaint. Mahendra and his wife, along with his cousin

Varun, and two others, Madesh and Bharat, were on his way to a temple in Hunsur taluk, as Varun had purchased a new autorickshaw. The complainant and his wife Mamatha were in their car, while Varun, Madesh and Bharath, were in the auto.

The accused blocked Mahendra's car, and smashed the windshield and the side glass. The pillar rider on the bike pulled Mahendra out of the car, used pepper spray and attacked him with a machete. Then they attacked his wife and snatched her gold chain.

As Varun wasn't able to find

the car following him, he backtracked his route until he found Manhendira, who was being attacked. As Varun attempted to rescue Mahendra and his wife, Varun and the other two relatives

were also attacked with pepper spray. The accused damaged the auto's windshield before escaping towards Mysuru.

"The victims called 112 and the patrolling team rushed to the spot. Since they were attacked with pepper spray, they were unable to take note of the bike's registration number. The accused escaped with a 10 gram gold chain," said an investigating officer.

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

15th April: This week, I'm going to take a look at lunar influences. Many people say that, as the Moon moves the tides, it must move us as well. This is possible, but if the Moon does affect us then it's in a different way from the oceans, and the exact mechanics have eluded us - so far. But watch this space!

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

It seems like so long since you had a really clear idea of your direction that you may have given up hope of ever knowing where you're heading. Yet, now that Mars is finally behaving itself, you'll be in an increasingly decisive mood. And the surely has to be good news.

TAURUS (Apr. 21 - May 21)

You're still busy but, with Venus now in a strangely sympathetic position, there should be fewer complications than in recent days, and more time to get on with activities that genuinely inspire you. Get up-to-date today and you'll be well prepared for a brief panic in a few days' time.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

People you're close to may have different ideas over joint resources. The fact remains that domestic purchases are necessary, although as they could work out more expensive than expected, you should keep spare cash available. At work, your intuitions come in handy.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

It's useful and, perhaps, highly profitable, to set at least one partnership on a more equal footing, and to make a break with any bad habits which have soured relationships in the past. The Sun will shortly be issuing one of its annual challenges to your sign, urging you to sit and take more notice of a partner's needs.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23)

It's a fine day to indulge a romantic fancy, perhaps to take a tip if you can liberate yourself from professional and domestic commitments. Be prepared for enjoyable but time-wasting diversions and distractions. Otherwise, you'll miss a chance to recharge your batteries.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)

You may still be disturbed by friends' behaviour, but there's a sense in which you have yourself contributed to an unwelcome developments. You should realise that people are imperfect creatures and try to be more tolerant in the future. The least you can expect is that partners make allowances for you as well.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)

The week shows every sign of ending on a restless note, with possible last-minute changes of plan. If you're still unsure of a new friendship, a secret plan, a financial deal, or an item of news, don't expect a final outcome just yet. After all, you're a patient soul.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

There's still time to catch up with changed circumstances in your career and to press ahead with plans for promotion, together with activities which will enhance your status and prestige. But don't expect a final outcome just yet. After all, you're a patient soul.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)

General planetary conditions are still muddled, so there's no harm in deferring important matters until the picture is clearer. Socially, sparks may fly, although arguments will be quickly made up. In fact, you might be surprised how easy it is to make peace.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)

Someone close may be acting out of character and a rival may have aroused suspicions but it's possible that you are misreading perfectly innocent behaviour. You will be growing increasingly impatient about what you see as partners' inefficiency at home. But then, that is only normal these days!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)

Partners are likely to make their minds up now and over the coming days. You may have a lot on your plate at work, in which case you must know under and put in some overtime. Make sure that family members don't feel let down, and step in now to offer help where it's needed.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)

If your work involves writing, education, the travel industry or any other form of communication, expect surprises. Not all will be to your liking, but most will be of welcome long-term benefit. Wise Pisceans will even be planning enterprises over the next few years.

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 1-9.

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 1-9.

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-24.

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-24.

Jumble puzzle grid with words: VOREH, GVILI, SARATY, CLNIEH.



THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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KNIGHTS RIDE ON THEIR MOMENTUM TO POST COMPREHENSIVE VICTORY
Kolkata Knight Riders outplay Lucknow Super Giants by eight wickets while Chennai Super Kings beat Mumbai Indians on Sunday...

SALT PEPPERS SUPER GIANTS AT EDEN GARDENS
While Sunil Narine has been taking the limelight so far, Phil Salt stepped up on Sunday with an unbeaten 89 from 47 balls as Kolkata overpowered Lucknow. Batting first, LSG had posted 161/7, thanks to Nicholas Pooran's late blitz (45 off 32), but in the end, it was not enough. Mitchell Starc, with figures of 3/28 in four overs, was the standout bowler for KKR

GAIKWAD COMES TO THE FORE FOR CHENNAI
■ Skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad led from the front with a 69 from 40 balls to set the tone. Later, Shivam Dube (66 n.o), who along with MS Dhoni (20 n.o from 4), took CSK to 206/4
■ Despite Rohit Sharma's century (105 n.o from 63 balls), Mumbai fell short by 20 runs. Matheesha Pathirana took 4/28 for CSK | **P15**

160.98

KOLKATA HAS THE HIGHEST BATTING SR IN POWERPLAY THIS SEASON SO FAR

BJP manifesto pitches for Viksit Bharat 2047

Promises UCC, one nation one poll, extended free ration scheme



PM Narendra Modi giving a copy of the BJP's manifesto to a worker | EXPRESS

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR
@ New Delhi

WITH just a few days left before the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls to begin, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday unveiled its manifesto titled 'Modi Ki Guarantee' focusing on One Nation One Election, Common Electoral Roll, Uniformed Civil Code and pitching for a stable and strong government as an imperative for the realisation of goal of 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India) by 2047. And to achieve that, the party will focus on youth, equality of women, farmers' welfare and economical empowerment of poor, says the manifesto. Releasing the manifesto, Prime Minister Narendra Modi pitched for electing a strong and stable government, saying with votes for the next five years he can shape the country's destiny for the next 1,000 years.

Modi said the UCC and One Nation One Election are in the interest of the country. The

BJP also mentioned its resolve to remove AFSPA from North East in a phase-wise manner.

Targeting voters in Tamil Nadu, the manifesto promises to establish Thiruvalluvar Cultural Centres across the world. "As the world's oldest language, Tamil fills us with immense pride, and the BJP is dedicated to elevating its global stature through concerted efforts," said Modi, who has spent considerable time campaigning in Tamil Nadu, which goes to polls in the first phase.

Highlighting his government's work in the past 10 years, the PM pointed out that 25 crore people have moved out of poverty. The free ration scheme will continue for five more years to support them so that they do not slip back into poverty, he added.

Among others, the manifesto promises to include all senior citizens above the age of 70 in the Ayushman Bharat scheme, which offers free treatment of up to ₹5 lakh per year to eligible persons. **P9**

Cong says no warranty for Modi's words

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE Congress on Sunday termed the BJP manifesto 'rhetoric' and Modi's guarantee a 'warranty of jumlas' saying he has failed to fulfil the promises he made in the past. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said India's youth are struggling for jobs and food prices have skyrocketed, but the BJP manifesto has no mention of these issues.

"No accountability for old guarantees, just empty jiggery of words," he wrote in a social media post.

Congress leader and Telangana CM Revanth Reddy said the BJP's manifesto is a 'post-date cheque drawn on a failing bank' and equated Viksit Bharat to BJP's 2004 election slogan India Shining, which failed.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah said, "Have they fulfilled what they had promised earlier? Did they give ₹15 lakh? Did they generate 2 crore jobs? Did they double farmer's income?" The BJP-led government has never fulfilled any promises and they will not fulfill in the future, too, he added.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin in a tweet said, "The BJP is perilously intent on dismantling the Constitution. With a voracious appetite for regression, they plot to thrust our nation back by two centuries."



HOW ISRAEL THWARTED 300 DRONES FROM IRAN

Missile interceptors fired by Israel's Iron Dome seen over central Israel on Sunday | AP

1 The Arrow: Designed to intercept long-range missiles, including the types of ballistic missiles Iran launched on Saturday night

2 David's Sling: It is designed to intercept medium-range missiles, such as those possessed by Hezbollah in Lebanon

3 Patriot: American-made air defence system is the oldest member of Israel's missile-defence system. Used to shoot down aircraft

4 Iron Dome: Specialist in shooting down short-range rockets, the type fired by Hamas. Israel says it has a success rate of 90%

5 Iron Beam: Israel is developing a new more efficient system to intercept incoming threats with laser technology

JAISHANKAR DIALS IRANIAN MINISTER

New Delhi: A day after Iran seized an Israeli-linked cargo ship with 17 Indians on board near the Gulf of Oman, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday spoke to his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian to ensure their safety and early release. "I spoke with Iranian FM and took up the release of 17 Indians in MSC Aires. We discussed the situation in the region and stressed on importance of avoiding escalation, exercising restraint and returning to diplomacy," said Dr Jaishankar, adding that he would remain in touch with FM Hossein Amir-Abdollahian

Iran launches its 1st direct attack on Israel

AGENCIES

IRAN launched its first direct attack on Israel on Saturday night, firing over 300 drones and ballistic missiles, and damaging an army base and injuring 12 people.

The unprecedented action by Tehran, which used to target Tel Aviv via its proxies such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria, and Houthis in Yemen, worsened the already precarious situation in West

Asia and sparked fears of a broader conflict in the region and beyond.

Israeli military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said 99% of the launches were intercepted, declaring that "the Iranian attack was foiled". While 170 drones and 30 cruise missiles were shot down before reaching Israel, a few of the 110 ballistic missiles did get through, the Israeli army said. Iran's proxies and allies also carried out co-

ordinated attacks on Israeli positions, it added.

Iran's overnight barrage came in retaliation for a deadly strike on Tehran's consulate in the Syrian capital by Israel. The Iranian army claimed its attack was "completed successfully", hinting that it won't launch further attacks unless Israel retaliates.

The development drew widespread condemnation and world leaders urged restraint amid fears that Israel will re-

taliate in kind, further escalating tensions.

Israel's top ally the US cautioned against an escalation. "We don't want to see this escalate. We're not looking for a wider war with Iran," White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told NBC.

US President Joe Biden said Washington will not support Israel in case it decides to launch a retaliatory strike against Iran. **P13**

INSIDE

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• IRANIANS TORN BETWEEN FEAR & PRIDE
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**DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICER,
BENGALURU DISTRICT
& CHIEF COMMISSIONER, BBMP**

N.R. Square, Bengaluru - 560 002.

GENERAL ELECTION TO LOK SABHA - 2024

Subject: Strict action will be taken against non-attendance of officers / personnel assigned for election duties-reg.

Polling Personnel Deployment:

Date of 2nd level Election Training	17th April 2024 at 9.30 AM
Date of Mustering	25th April 2024 at 9.00 AM
Date of Poll	26th April 2024

CAUTION

Failure to report for election training, mustering and election poll duty shall attract cognizable penal action u/s 134 of RP Act 1951 and immediate FIR will be booked against the defaulting official and arrest warrant will be issued to produce official before District Election Officer. Also, disciplinary action will be initiated against such personnel under relevant provisions of service rules.

A Nodal Officer has been appointed from each sponsoring office for the purpose of polling personnel deployment. He shall serve the election duty orders on their staff and ensure their attendance at the training, mustering and poll duty. Any negligence in performing the above said duties shall attract cognizable penal action u/s 134 of RP Act 1951 and disciplinary action under relevant service rules.

Polling personnel can download election duty orders from BBMP website
<https://webapps.bbmpgov.in/election2024>

PRO's and APRO's are requested to download PRO HANDBOOK from
<https://eci.gov.in>

District Election Officer, Bengaluru District &
Chief Commissioner, BBMP, Bengaluru

Cong sultan of tukde-tukde gang, supports divisive forces, says PM

K SHIVA KUMAR @Mysuru

PM Narendra Modi tore into Congress, calling it the voice of divisive forces and labelling it the sultan of the tukde-tukde gang. Presenting his progress card and the vision for the country at the first-ever Vijay Sankalp Yatra, organised jointly by BJP and its ally JDS here, he said Congress leaders have to seek permission from their bosses to chant patriotic slogans. He accused Congress of hindering progress, engaging in divisive politics and pursuing appeasement policies and denting the image of the country abroad. "You have seen the nation's progress. But the Congress' language is different and it supports controversial forces. It is working with the political wing of divisive forces. Will you give the baton of power into such hands," he asked the voters. **P6**



PM Narendra Modi and JDS supremo HD Deve Gowda at the Vijay Sankalp Yatra in Mysuru on Sunday | UDAYSHANKAR S

Battleground of royal lineage vs commoner in Mysuru-Kodagu

KARTHIK KK @Mysuru

A high-voltage contest between royal lineage and grassroots appeal is on in the Mysuru-Kodagu Lok Sabha constituency. While Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has staked his reputation on his home turf, the BJP is eyeing a third consecutive win here. Eighteen candidates are vying for attention but the spotlight is on the scion of the erstwhile Mysuru royal family, Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar, contesting on a BJP ticket. His main challenger is the general secretary of the state Congress unit, M Lakshmana, a first-timer in the arena.

The saffron party's surprise nomination of Yaduveer, dropping its incumbent MP Pratap Simha, was hailed as a 'masterstroke'. But it gave the CM the opportunity to play the Vokkaliga card. Internal dissent within the BJP after Sim-

ha's axing was swiftly resolved with the intervention of top leaders.

But since Simha is a Vokkaliga, there is some disquiet with the community. So, the Congress strategically fielded Lakshmana, a fellow Vokkaliga, to mine the disenchantment. In fact, Lakshmana is the first Vokkaliga fielded from the constituency by Congress for over 40 years. The clash, therefore, transcends party lines. The Congress turned the narrative into a dynasty versus commoner duel, emblematic of Karnataka's intricate political tapestry.

The BJP hopes to harness the party's electoral might and the JD(S) MLAs to secure a lead of at least 1 lakh votes for Yaduveer, while the Congress is banking on Lakshmana's Vokkaliga roots while consolidating its traditional vote bank.

However, the Congress faces the daunting task of dismantling Yaduveer's royal aura, which is deeply ingrained in parts of Mysuru. The resurgence of the Wadiyar family in politics after two decades adds to the nostalgia factor.

Yaduveer's campaign emphasises industrial growth intertwined with heritage preservation, engaging with students and youth. In contrast, Lakshmana outlines a comprehensive vision for Mysuru and Kodagu's development and showcases the result of the Congress' guarantee programmes.

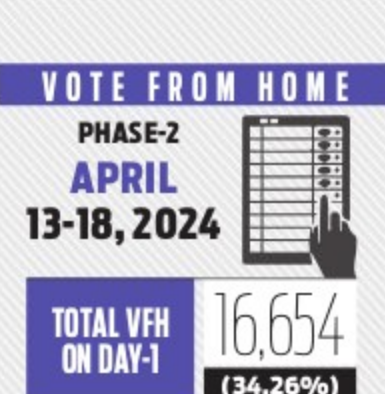
With Vokkaligas constituting a pivotal demographic, the Congress hopes to tap into it while defending its traditional strongholds. Siddaramaiah's personal investment in Lakshmana's candidacy shows the battle's prestige, framing it as a referendum on his leadership.

Would the BJP's royal gambit outshine the Congress' grassroots appeal? Or, can the Congress nibble into the BJP's Vokkaliga support base? Watch this space.

SHOWTIME FOR GLADIATORS



ILLUSTRATION: MANDAR PARDIKAR



GOWDA LAUDS MODI AS PM, SAYS CONG SIPHONING OFF STATE FUNDS

JDS supremo positions NDA as a force capable of elevating India's global status



JDS state president HD Kumaraswamy, BJP leader BS Yediyurappa and JDS supremo H D Deve Gowda share the dais with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the Vijaya Sankalpa Yatra in Mysuru on Sunday | UDAYASHANKAR S

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mysuru

FORMER prime minister and JDS supremo HD Deve Gowda, in a politically charged speech, sought votes for the NDA candidates in the Vijaya Sankalpa Yatra in Mysuru on Sunday.

Along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Gowda's presence added momentum to the NDA's campaign in Karnataka, particularly in the Old Mysuru region. At 91, Gowda's speech resonated with passion and purpose, emphasising key issues crucial to NDA's electoral success in Karnataka in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Despite his age, his energy and determination were palpable as he targeted the Congress State Government and its programmes.

Acknowledging Modi's leadership, Gowda lauded him for bringing honor to the nation during his tenure as the PM for the last 10 years.

Expressing regret for his physical limitations, Gowda apologised for not being able to stand to greet Modi, citing knee pain, showcasing the bonhomie between the PM and the former PM. Gowda's speech was not just about praise; it was a strategic critique of the Opposition's policies. He highlighted the need to defeat the Congress that, ac-

cording to him, was siphoning Karnataka's resources. His sharp words against the Congress leadership, particularly Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CMD DK Shivakumar showed his commitment to the NDA's cause.

Reflecting on his political journey, Gowda reminisced about the successful initiative under former CM and his son HD Kumaraswamy's Pancharatna programme while criticising last-minute populist taken by Congress before elections. Gowda also recalled he did not tell his son Kumaraswamy to go with the BJP without sense but he asked to do alliance with Modi, as he explained, he was driven by a desire to prevent the exploitation of Karnataka.

Amid references to historical figures, Gowda expressed confidence in NDA's ability to secure victory in all 28 seats in Karnataka. He urged support for Modi's economic agenda, positioning NDA as the force capable of elevating India's global status. Speaking on the occasion, MLA GT Devegowda sparked a controversy, slamming the Congress-led State Government's guarantee schemes by saying its sixth promise was a "Terrorist Guarantee".

Cong will disappear from country: BSY

Mysuru: Former chief minister BS Yediyurappa said the BJP will win all the 28 Lok Sabha seats in the state and the entire world is looking towards Bharat. "BJP and JDS are like milk and honey. We have decided to work together for the welfare of the people. The Congress leaders are in delusion that they can come to power through money and muscle power and by sowing the seeds of casteism in the minds of people. But I want to clarify to Congress leaders that after the election results, the party will lose its address and disappear from the country," he said at the joint Vijaya Sankalpa Samavesha organised by the BJP and JDS at Maharaja's Ground on Sunday. Yediyurappa said Congress leaders continue to speak nonsense while campaigning for which the people of Mysuru and Chamarajanagar will give a befitting reply in the election. ENS

'Like my ancestors, I too will work for people'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mysuru

MYSURU constituency's BJP-JDS candidate Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar on Sunday took an indirect jibe at sceptics questioning his dedication to serving the common people, and affirmed his commitment to the public's welfare.

Speaking at the joint Vijaya Sankalpa Samavesha organized by the BJP and JDS at Maharaja's Ground on Sunday, Yaduveer responded to doubts about whether a member of the royal family, residing in a palace, could effectively engage with and serve the people.

"I want to clarify that while my ancestors lived in the palace, they dedicated themselves to the welfare of the people. Despite being born and raised in a palace, I am determined to stand with the people and advocate for their welfare within the democratic framework. Just as the Wadiyars once pulled the chariot of Goddess Chamundeshwari, now it's our duty to propel the chariot of Bharat Mata alongside PM Modi," he emphasized.

Yaduveer highlighted Modi's decade-long tenure, citing various developmental initiatives undertaken. "PM Modi introduced modern yoga to the world, an endeavour originally championed by yoga guru Krishnamacharya at Mysuru Palace. Modi's efforts have garnered international recognition for yoga and safeguarded India's cultural heritage," he asserted.



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah flags off an election campaign rally in Madikeri on Sunday | EXPRESS

Lotus good in lake, paddy in farm, hands that help good in admin: DKS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Madikeri

"LOTUS looks good in a lake, paddy nice in a farmland, and the hands that help look good in administration. We stand with self-confidence today after implementing all the five guarantees. It is a fight between truth and lies," said Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, taking part in a massive Lok Sabha election rally at Gandhi Maidan in Madikeri on Sunday.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah too was on the dais, but the Congress candidate, MLakshmana, was missing as the cost of the event would have been added to his campaign account.

Shivakumar started off attacking JDS state president HD Kumaraswamy for his alleged remark that womenfolk in villages are losing their way because of the Congress government's guarantees. "Former PM late Indira Gandhi fought for women's freedom and independence. However, Kumaraswamy has brought disgrace to women and humanity. I demand an answer from the Prime Minister and ministers Nirmala Sitharaman and Smriti Irani on

the disgrace heaped on women by their alliance leader," he said.

Commenting that BJP has not kept up its promise of providing jobs to youth and depositing Rs 15 lakh into the account of each Indian citizen, he said, "We have fulfilled all guarantees. It is a battle between truth and lies."

He urged voters to choose a candidate who will be available 24/7 to listen to their problems and voice the same in Parliament. He promised health insurance of up to Rs 25 lakh, Rs 1 lakh every year to women and waiving off farm loans if Congress comes to power at the Centre.

Siddaramaiah said RSS and BJP are lovers of dictatorship and alleged that BJP is trying to change the Constitution. "Modi and the BJP believe in the policies of Hitler and Mussolini. BJP fears losing this election and that is why it did not give the ticket to the sitting MP from Kodagu-Mysuru and several other places. Our candidate is a simple man and will voice your demands in Parliament. One who sits at home and cannot voice your opinion must not become an MP," he mocked.

We stand with self-confidence today after implementing all the five guarantees. It is a fight between truth and lies. choose a candidate who will be available 24/7 to listen to your problems — DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

How much Somanna looted: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Tumakuru

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday gave a call to voters of Tumakuru Lok Sabha seat to show the door to BJP candidate V Somanna as was done in Varuna and Chamarajanagar assembly constituencies.

"He lost against me by a margin of 48,000 votes despite spending Rs 50 crore to Rs 60 crore and against Puttaranga Shetty by a 12,000-vote margin even after spending Rs 50 crore. Within a span of ten months, he is contesting the polls again. Just imagine how much money he must have looted. He was part of the previous BJP government that looted the state," he said at a public rally at Kibbanahalli cross.

He said Somanna as housing minister could not distribute houses to the poor and urged voters to elect Congress candidate S P Muddahanume Gowda who could be the voice of Tumakuru and also the state in the parliament as he did during 2014-2019 as MP.

He also attacked Narendra Modi, saying the PM did not deliver the goods as he promised in his ten years of tenure.

Congress supports controversial forces, says Modi

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

HITTING out at Congress for not participating in the inauguration of Ram temple that fulfilled the 500-year-old aspiration of the people, he said the opposition party is against Sanatan Dharma. He accused Congress and its allies of insulting and hurting the sentiments of people and indulging in appeasement politics. He targeted Congress president Mallikarajun Kharge for raking up the abrogation of Article 370.

On the Sankalp Patra - BJP's manifesto, he said it is a road map filled with promises aimed at transforming the life of every Indian. He said he is committed to build three crore new homes for the underprivileged, supply free ration to the needy, provide free medical treatment to senior citizens under the Ayushman scheme and empower three crore women to become 'lakshpatris'.

He emphasised the BJP's commitment to promoting local languages, preserving her-

itage sites and putting Mysuru, Hampi and Badami on the world heritage map that would not only boost tourism but also create employment opportunities. Presenting his 10-year progress card, he highlighted the expansion of national highways, success of Mysuru-Bengaluru Expressway, Jal Jeevan Mission benefiting thousands of villages with access to clean water, free ration to four crore people and housing scheme aiding 4.50 lakh families.

"The Congress government

in Karnataka is looting and has become an ATM for the party. The government treasury is empty. Development and welfare schemes are being discontinued. Farmers were promised free power, but there is no power supply to irrigation pumpsets. The government has withdrawn Kissan Samman. Bengaluru is facing a water scarcity, leading to a black market of water tankers. Hundreds of crores of black money is being distributed to fight elections," he said.

THOUSANDS TURN UP FOR MODI ROADSHOW IN MANGALURU

VINCENT D'SOUZA & DIVYA CUTINHA @Mangaluru

A HUGE crowd turned up at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's roadshow in Mangaluru on Sunday. The PM, who arrived at Mangaluru International Airport at 7.15 pm, drove straight to Brahmarshi Narayan Guru Circle in the city while greeting people standing on either sides of the road with folded hands.

He started the roadshow after offering floral tributes to the statue of social reformer Narayana Guru amid the chanting of slokas. Thousands of people sporting saffron caps and shawls greeted the PM by waving BJP flags, saffron shawls and showering flowers.

Riding on a decorated open vehicle, the PM, who sported a

saffron cap, waved at the enthusiastic crowd with a Lotus, the BJP symbol, in hand. He was flanked by Capt Brijesh Chowta and Kota Srinivas Poojary, BJP candidates from Dakshina Kannada and Udupi-Chikkamagaluru constituencies, respectively. The roadshow culminated at Navabharat Circle, which is about 2 km away from Narayan Guru Circle, at 8.45 pm. He got into an SUV at Navabharat Circle and waved at people by standing on the footboard up to Hampankatta Circle.

Beating of drums and playing of musical instruments and performances by Yakshagana, tiger dance and other troupes energised the crowd. People cheered their favourite leader all along the roadshow by raising 'Jai Jai Modi' slogans.

Mangaluru turned saffron with BJP flags and bunting and a fortress for the Modi event. Security was beefed up in the areas along the roadshow route. Since 2 pm, the traffic on the route was blocked. People started arriving for the roadshow from 5 pm onwards to find a proper place to have a glimpse of the PM.

Roopa D Bangera, a former BJP corporator, said the roadshow has energised the BJP workers and supporters. Another BJP follower said she turned up at the event in order to show her gratitude to Modi for making Ram Mandir a reality.

MP Nalin Kumar Kateel and BJP MLAs from Dakshina Kannada and Udupi greeted Modi before the start of the roadshow. Capt Chowta presented a portrait of a goddess to the PM.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Belagavi

AFTER former BJP MLA Sanjay Patil kicked up a controversy for stating that Women and Child Development Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar "must have an extra peg to have good sleep", a large group of women Congress workers gathered in front of his residence in Belagavi on Saturday night and staged a protest condemning his statement.

In a meeting of BJP workers in Belagavi rural assembly constituency on Saturday, Patil had remarked that "minister Laxmi Hebbalkar will not get a good sleep after seeing the increasing support of women for the BJP. She has to consume a sleeping pill or else will have to consume one extra peg to get good sleep".

Later, Hebbalkar condemned the statement, saying it is not only ugly, but disrespectful to the entire women folk. "Real Hindu culture lies in respecting women, but Patil has shown the real culture of the BJP," she said.

The party workers also tore a poster of Patil and then raised slogans against him. They demanded Patil openly apologise to Hebbalkar. The police tried to convince the agitating women to withdraw the protest, but failed initially.



Congress workers stage a protest outside the house of former BJP MLA Sanjay Patil in Belagavi on Saturday night | EXPRESS

The agitators demanded that Patil come out from the house "if he is a man". The agitators finally withdrew their protest on the request of police.

Meant peg of energy drink not liquor: Patil

"I have not spoken lightly about women or minister Laxmi Hebbalkar. I never mentioned her name anywhere in my speech. It is being made a big issue for political mileage," said former BJP MLA Sanjay Patil. "I meant peg of energy drink, not liquor," he added.

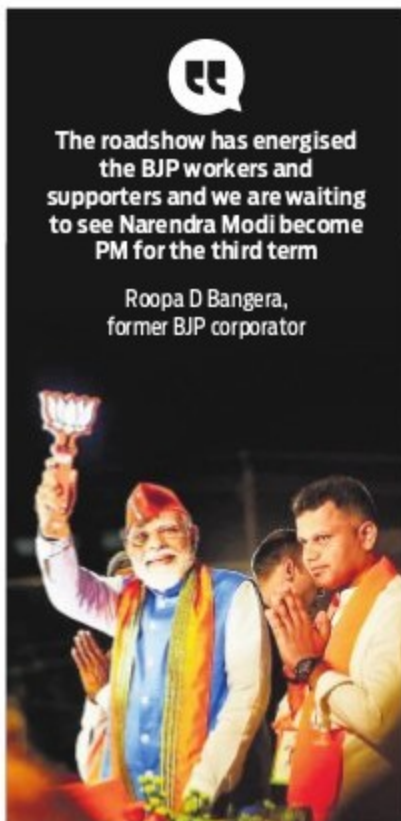
Speaking to media persons here on Sunday, he said, "I said 'Akkabai' (elder sister) in my speech, so is Hebbalkar the only one who is called 'Akkabai' in Belagavi?" "I have respect for women.

But, Hebbalkar is trying to make it a big issue for political mileage. She sent hundreds of women to my house to stage a protest by misusing her powers. My mother is 90 years old, and I am a heart patient. Is it right for so many women to come to my house and blame me in singular?"

'Insult to entire fraternity'

Reacting to former BJP MLA Sanjay Patil's statement, Women and Child Development Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar said Patil insulted not only me, but to the entire women fraternity.

"I am a woman from the Lingayat community. This is insult to the entire community. I appeal women of the entire state to condemn this act."



Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets the crowd during a roadshow in Mangaluru on Sunday | EXPRESS

Jagan attack: Attempt to murder case booked

Preliminary report submitted to CEO; 16 suspects detained; Six special teams to investigate all angles

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

A day after a stone was hurled at Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy at Ajit Singh Nagar in Vijayawada during his 'Mamanta Siddham' bus yatra on Saturday, NTR district police has registered a case under IPC Section 307 (punishment for attempt to murder) based on a complaint from Velampalli Srinivas Rao, West MLA and YSRC candidate for Central constituency. As many as 16 persons have been taken into custody on suspicion that they might be involved in the attack on the YSRC president.

Speaking to TNIE, DGP Kasireddy Rajendranath Reddy on Sunday said NTR district commissioner of police (CP) Kanthi Rana Tata has formed six special teams, comprising more than 20 officer from various wings, to investigate the issue in all aspects. He added that aerial survey of the location was conducted. Additionally, dog squad and drone cameras have been deployed to collect clues from the scene of the incident.

Stating that a meeting was conducted with all commis-



YSRC leaders and cadre stage a protest against the attack on CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy during his bus yatra on Sunday.

sioners and SPs to review security in the wake of the incident, he explained, "All CPs and SPs have been instructed to beef up security cover for Jagan during his poll campaign. Officials have been instructed to deploy additional police forces in the night."

The DGP added that a report of the preliminary investigation on the incident has been submitted to the chief electoral officer (CEO) Mukesh Kumar Meena. Sharing more details on the incident, NTR district

CP Kanthi Rana Tata said based on the complaint from Vellampalli Srinivas Rao and allegations by YSRC leaders that a sling shot or air gun was used to attack the Chief Minister, the scene at the Sri Vivekananda School was reconstructed as part of the investigation.

Suspecting that the incident might be a mischievous act, Rana said, "The accused might be a resident of the same area. We are trying our best to identify the culprits behind the incident."

TDP URGES CEC TO TRANSFER TOP OFFICERS FOR 'FAILING' TO PROTECT JAGAN

Vijayawada: The TDP requested the Chief Election Commissioner to immediately transfer the top three State police officers for "failing" to protect the Chief Minister, who was hurt in a stone pelting incident, and maintain law and order. The chief minister sustained a minor injury on his left eyebrow in stone-pelting in Vijayawada during his election campaign on Saturday. In a letter written to the CEC, former TDP Rajya Sabha MP and senior advocate Kanakamedala Ravindra Kumar strongly condemned the attack on the CM and expressed concern over the police department failing to provide "adequate protection" to the CM in Vijayawada city itself where top brass of police are stationed. Kumar said Jagan's party YSRC is now blaming the opposition leader for this attack and TDP fears that the police may foist false cases against its workers to cover up their failures. "If the police cannot provide protection to the CM and make proper arrangements for the PM's programme, we cannot expect that they would ensure law and order and allow free and fair elections in the state on May 13," he said.

OPPOSITION ORCHESTRATED THE ATTACK ON CHIEF MINISTER, SAYS SAJJALA

Vijayawada: YSRC general secretary Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy has termed the Saturday's attack on Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in Vijayawada as a cold-blooded pre-planned attack. Sajjala said that unable to face Jagan directly, the opposition has orchestrated the attack. "It is a cowardly act," he said. Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Sajjala took exception to the TDP leaders alleging that Jagan was staging a drama that he was attacked. "We do not enact dramas like the Opposition leader N Chandrababu Naidu. Does he have any sense to say that it was a stage-managed attack. Would anyone who orchestrates an attack on himself, get hit at such a sensitive part?" he questioned. Sajjala asked if the murderous attempt on Naidu at Alipiri was also a drama. "The then opposition leader YS Rajasekhara Reddy has observed a silent protest to extend solidarity towards Naidu," Sajjala recalled and said Naidu even used the attack to gain sympathy and went for early polls.

POLITICAL BLAME GAME

'Union govt allotting ₹10.76L cr to TN a lie'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Chennai

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK president MK Stalin on Sunday said that the BJP-led union government's claim that it has allocated Rs 10.76 lakh crore to Tamil Nadu during the past 10 years, is a blatant lie.

Referring to the election advertisements issued by the BJP in newspapers on Sunday that the BJP-led union government had generously allocated Rs 10.76 lakh crore during the last 10 years, the DMK president said, that even in this false claim, the BJP reeled out 'fraudulent accounts' on a few heads like AIIMS hospital (Rs 1,960 crore) in Madurai, Chennai Metro Rail Project (Rs 63,246 crore) and Sagarmala Project (Rs 2 lakh crore). The AIIMS hospital is yet to be built, and the Chennai Metro Rail Project and Sagarmala Project did not receive even a rupee, he said. "Thus, by reeling out these false claims, the BJP-led un-

ion government is trying to hoodwink the people of Tamil Nadu together," he added. The DMK president explained that there are two components in the devolution of funds from the union government: The first is the direct devolution of funds by the recommendation of the union finance commission. Under this, Tamil Nadu was given Rs 5.5 lakh crore while Uttar Pradesh got Rs 18.5 lakh crore. The second component is the allocation of funds for the schemes and projects to be implemented by the union government directly in the states. In the second component, the BJP has reeled out many false accounts.

Countering the CM's remarks, BJP State president K Annamalai, in his post on X said, Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin has been claiming that the central government has given just Rs 1.7 lakh crore, the CM has said that the state received Rs 5.5 lakh crore.



MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

Man gets 5 yrs RI; purchase from crime proceeds to be seized

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

A special court sentenced John Michael to five years rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 5 lakh on the accused for offences punishable under Sections 3 and 4 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), and also passed an order to confiscate the two sites and a car purchased in his wife's name, from the proceeds of the crime, to the Union Government.

Impersonating as the personal secretary of then chief minister Dharam Singh, Michael had induced innocent public into parting with a huge amount of money under the pretext of providing them with BDA sites under the CM's discretionary quota.

On March 14, the special court had sentenced Michael to five years RI and a fine of Rs 44.10 lakh for the offences under the IPC. Now, in a money laundering case registered by the ED in 2010, the special court judge Santhosh Gajanan Bhat, on April 6, passed another order to confiscate immovable property - a residential site and building thereon bearing No 3, measuring 1,400 sqft in Jinkethimmanahalli of Bidarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru North taluk, and another site bearing No 4 measuring 620 sqft in the same area, in Manjula

Michael's name, and car to the Centre.

"By looking into the facts and circumstances of the case, the materials produced would clearly indicate that the properties were purchased out of the proceeds of the crime. I have also bestowed my anxious reading to the fact that accused No 2 - Manjula is declared to be absconding accused and a split up case has been registered against her," the judge noted.

Michael (46), a resident of TC Palya, Bengaluru, does not show scant respect for the law by once again forging and fabricating an order indicating lifting the order of attachment of the house property in site No 3 to sell the same. For which, a separate crime was registered against him in 2022, which is pending adjudication.

Referring to this, the ED contended that since Michael is a habitual offender, no leniency can be shown to him and accordingly, maximum punishment be imposed, besides confiscating the properties purchased by him in his wife's name from the proceeds of predicate offences.

Terming the offence as a white-collared offence, which bleeds the economy of the nation, the court noted that it required to impose maximum punishment.

Film producer Soundarya Jagadeesh dies by suicide

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

WELL-known Kannada film producer and businessman Soundarya Jagadeesh died by suicide at his residence in Mahalakshmi Layout on Sunday morning. While depression is suspected to be the reason for the extreme step, the police are also not ruling out the possibility of financial distress driving him to take the decision.

Jagadeesh, besides producing films, was also a builder and was running Jet Lag Bar & Grill, a pub in Subramanya Na-

gar. He has produced several films, including Appu Pappu, Snehitaru, Mast Maja Maadi and Rameela, in Kannada.

The police said Jagadeesh was found hanging in his room by his wife and son on Sunday around 9.15 am. They immediately rushed him to a nearby hospital, where he was declared brought dead. No suicide note has been found and investigations are on to know the reasons for the extreme step, the police said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Saidulu Adavath



HELPLINE

If you are having suicidal thoughts, or are worried about a friend or need emotional support, someone is always there to listen. Call Sneha Foundation - 04424640050, Tele Manas - 14416 (available 24x7) or call the Tata Institute of Social Sciences' helpline - 02225521111, which is available Monday to Saturday from 8 am to 10 pm.

said, "It was found during the investigation that Jagadeesh was under depression after he lost his mother-in-law, with whom he was very close, recently. While depression is suspected to be the reason, we are

5 of family killed as truck overturns

Bagalkot: IN a tragic road accident, five people of a family have died near Yetratti cross, Bilagi taluk on Sunday evening. The deceased are Yenappa Tolmatti (72), his wife Yelavva Tolmatti (66), son Pundalik Tolmatti (40), daughter Nagavva (43) and her husband Ashok Bammannavar (48). All are said to be from Badardinni village, Bilagi taluk. They were travelling back to their houses after working in the farms as daily wage labourers. As they were preparing to walk back and were standing on the roadside, a truck carrying mud suddenly overturned after one of its tyres burst. The truck fell over the family members which resulted in sudden death of all five members. Following the accident, the truck driver fled from the spot, but local residents rushed to save the people but none could be saved. Bilagi police staff later arrived at the spot and sent the bodies to the hospital for autopsy. A case has been registered.



Police personnel of Coimbatore district, deployed for bandobust duty during the general elections, scheduled on April 19 in Tamil Nadu, exercise their franchise through postal ballot, in Coimbatore on Sunday | SSENAGAPANDIYAN

DEMOCRATIC DUTY

Flight to Hyd cancelled in Tel Aviv; 5 Indians stuck

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Hyderabad

AT least five people, natives of Telangana, were waiting to board their flight to Hyderabad at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport when Iran launched hundreds of drones and missiles on the Jewish nation.

However, to their dismay, the flights were cancelled as the Israeli authorities ordered the shutdown of its airspace. As a result, all the passengers were

asked to return to their homes. Recounting the incident, C Prakash, a native of Nizamabad who has lived in Tel Aviv for six years, explained how some passengers were afraid to step out of the airport after the cancellation announcement was made.

"My flight was scheduled for 12 a.m. from FlyDubai Airlines (Dubai-based) via Dubai, so I had arrived well before time. There were only around 150 people at the air-

port, as it was the weekend, and we were five from Telangana. As ours was a return flight, it was coming from Dubai, but it could not land. When I was at the check-in counter before boarding, the airline staff came suddenly and informed us that the flights had been cancelled," Prakash told TNIE over the phone from Israel's cultural and financial capital.

The 45-year-old, who hails from Degaon village in Ar-

mur mandal and works in the caregiving profession, went on to say, "The authorities said the flight was cancelled as Iran has launched an attack on Israel. Even though we had heard of its probability for the past few days, many were taken aback. Tension was clear on the faces of many people. But some, like me, came out and booked our taxis for home. I was confident that Israeli forces would handle the situation."

Heatwave to return, be careful during rallies: IMD

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bhubaneswar/Hyderabad

AMID electioneering heating up in Odisha, the mercury level is also expected to soar with IMD forecasting heatwave conditions in parts of the state for four days.

The national weather forecaster has suggested the concerned authorities to judiciously monitor election rallies and gatherings during peak hours of the day between 11 am and 3 pm. People attending poll rallies and gatherings have been advised to take necessary precautions and avoid prolonged exposures in areas experiencing high humidity and temperatures.

Candidates and their party workers planning to sweat it out in the searing heat this

week is not advisable as the heatwave spell is likely to be longer than the one which occurred earlier in the month. Hot and discomfort weather conditions had prevailed on April 2 and 3 and heatwave on 4 and 5. The regional Met office has issued a heatwave warning for one or two places in Cuttack, Nayagarh, Dhenkanal, Bhadrak and Jajpur districts on Monday. Hot and humid weather is likely to prevail at a few places in Cuttack, Khurda and eight other districts during the period. More districts are expected to come under the grip of heatwave from Tuesday onwards. The Met office has predicted heatwave at one or two places in 12 districts on Tuesday, and at a few places in 15 districts in the subsequent two days.



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EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Hyderabad

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22-yr-old youth dies after bike crashes into wall

Bengaluru: A 22-year-old youth died after he rammed his two-wheeler into the compound wall of an office on Hesaraghatta main road, on Saturday night. The police identified the deceased as Darshan, a resident of Byatha village who was an agriculturist. The incident took place near Jyothi Educational Institution on Hesaraghatta main road at around 7:30 pm. Darshan reportedly lost control of his bike, hit a tree, and collided with the compound wall of the horticultural office, causing severe head injuries. He succumbed to his injuries.

Lightning kills a farmer at NR Pura

Chikkamagaluru: After long spell of heatwave in the state, parts of NR Pura including the Malnad region, received rain coupled with lightning and thunder on Saturday evening. A 48-year-old farmer, Shankar, from Aralikoppa taluk was working in the areca plantation while it was raining. He was struck by a lightning bolt, and died on the spot due to the impact.





CONG PILLORIES HDK ON 'WOMEN LOSING WAY' REMARK, TO PROTEST

Attempts to project BJP-JDS alliance as being 'anti-women' and against guarantees

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI
@ Bengaluru

WITH former chief minister H D Kumaraswamy triggering a controversy by stating that women in villages have lost their way because of the five guarantees doled out by the Congress government, the Grand Old Party grabbed the opportunity to turn the tables against the BJP-JDS alliance as being 'anti-women'.

The Congress, which has been alleging that the BJP-JDS alliance partners are against the guarantees, is now set to project them as insulting women beneficiaries. "Narendra Modi Ji, you are on a state tour. What do you have to say about Kumaraswamy's derogatory remarks about women? Defending his statement? If not, will you break the JD(S) alliance with BJP?" questioned AICC general secretary and Karnataka in-charge Randeep Singh Surjewala.

"My mothers and sisters of the state have been insulted by Kumaraswamy. I do not demand that Kumaraswamy should apologise. Instead, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union ministers Nirmala Sitharaman

and Smriti Irani should clarify." DCM and KPCC president D K Shivakumar said at a press meet in Kodagu. He also held a virtual meeting with the party's leaders who decided to hold protests against Kumaraswamy across the state on Monday.

The controversy broke out when Kumaraswamy, while campaigning for NDA candidate V Somanna at a roadshow at Turuvekere in Tumakuru LS constituency on Saturday, stated that women in villages had lost their way a bit ('daari tappiddare' in Kannada).

On Sunday, women members of the Congress staged a protest in Mandya, from where Kumaraswamy is the NDA candidate, and shouted "Go back!" slogans against him.

"What does it mean that mothers have gone astray? There are many women in your family too. By using this word, you have joined BJP as a 'manuvadi'," former MP VS Ugrappa, said, and urged Kumaraswamy to apologise immediately.

Revenue minister



Krishna Byre Gowda alleged that Kumaraswamy, who had himself claimed to have gone astray, had insulted women to whom the government had given financial support, considering them to be pillars of families. "We are giving guarantees to poor garment workers, street vendors, domestic helpers and daily wage workers. We are not giving them to women who go to clubs (for recreation)," he said.

Mothers misled by guarantees: JDS

The JDS alleged that the Congress party has twisted Kumaraswamy's statement.

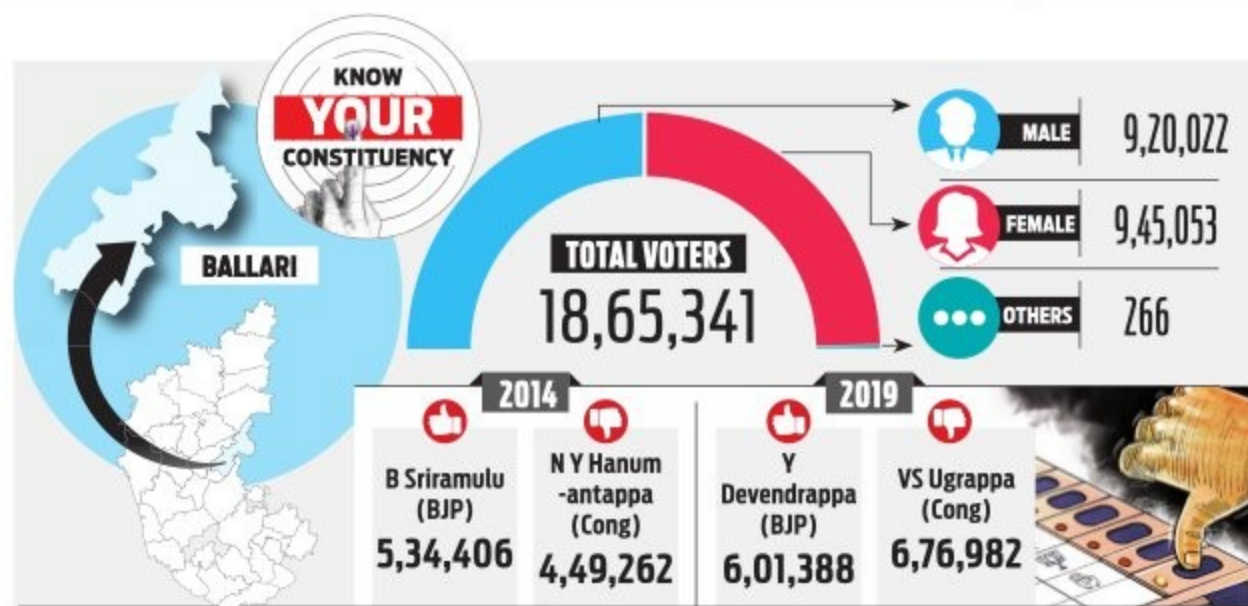
"Kumaraswamy said that mothers are being misled by the guarantees. Instead of providing free healthcare and free education, they (Congress) are taking political mileage cheaply. Congress is masking the truth with lies to cover up its sins. In fact, what is going astray is the economy of the state, the pride of Karnataka, the prestige of Karnataka," it posted on 'X'.

Suo motu cases against HDK, Patil

The Karnataka Women's Commission will register a suo motu case against HD Kumaraswamy and issue a notice, said Commission chairperson Dr Nagalakshmi Choudhary. She said Kumaraswamy's remarks are derogatory to the dignity of women. A case will also be registered against former BJP MLA Sanjay Patil for making derogatory remarks on Women and Child Welfare Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar. He had said that seeing the overwhelming response to the BJP in Belagavi, Laxmi would need an extra peg (of liquor) to sleep.

I have not insulted women but only said that innocent people and women are being misled in the name of guarantees. When I was CM, I brought many schemes for women, and also banned arrack when they raised their voice. I never spoke lightly against women.

HD Kumaraswamy, former CM



Sriramulu looks to return to winning ways in Ballari battle

KIRAN BALANNANAVAR @ Ballari

BALLARI, known for its iron ore mines, will witness a closely fought contest between former BJP minister B Sriramulu and four-time MLA from Sandur, E Tukaram, of the Congress. The constituency is reserved for candidates belonging to the Scheduled Tribes after delimitation in 2008.

For Sriramulu, who lost from Ballari in the 2023 Assembly elections to B Nagen-dra of the Congress, winning the constituency is a matter of prestige.

The constituency has eight Assembly segments, of which six were won by the Congress in the 2023 Assembly polls. The BJP and JDS, who are in alliance now, had won a seat each.

The constituency, which has over 6 lakh ST voters, also has a considerable population of Lingayats, Minorities, and Kurubas, who play a significant role in electing the MP.

Before being reserved for the STs, the Ballari Lok Sabha constituency had remained a bastion of the Congress as it had won all the General Elections between 1952 and 1999. The decline of the Grand Old Party began in the 2000s with the emergence of the BJP and the Reddy Brothers. The saffron party has held the seat in



E Tukaram B Sriramulu

all four General Elections held since 2004, except for its defeat in the 2018 by-election. The constituency shot into the limelight in the 1999 Lok Sabha elections after former Congress president Sonia Gandhi defeated former Union Minister Sushma Swaraj.

Fast-forward to 2024, Sriramulu, a tall ST community leader, will take on Sandur MLA, E Tukaram, who is banking on the Congress State Government's guarantee schemes to emerge victorious.

The BJP, however, is not comfortably placed, as it has just one MLA from the constituency. Krishna Nayaka was the lone BJP candidate who won from the district in the 2023 Assembly polls. Former minister and former mining baron, Gali Janardhana Reddy, quitting the BJP to float his own party ahead of the 2023 Assembly polls, was a major factor in the BJP's poor show. Now, with Reddy back in the

party, the BJP looks to retain the Ballari LS seat that it won in 2019. Reddy, MLA from Gangavathi in Koppal district, however, cannot campaign in Ballari as the Supreme Court has barred him from entering the district in connection with an illegal mining case.

The Congress, however, hopes to continue with its good run after the party won six of the eight Assembly segments in 2023.

Though there was a delay in announcing its candidate, the party has set its camp right, with all leaders working to ensure Tukaram's victory. The BJP hopes that Sriramulu, apart from attracting ST voters, will also get the backing of the Lingayats. On the other hand, the Congress says that Tukaram has the strong backing of the Minorities, Kurubas, SCs, and others.

Sriramulu is also playing the sympathy card, saying that he lost last year's Assembly elections despite bringing in several developmental works to the district. "Apart from banking on PM Modi's charisma, Sriramulu is also playing with people's minds, saying that Tukaram's victory would lead to a bypoll for the Sandur seat," a political expert said.

Tukaram is betting on the performance of the Siddaramaiah government and its success in implement

After son hops to Cong, Hebbbar hits out at BJP

SUBHASH CHANDRA NS
@ Yellapur (Uttara Kannada)

BJP MLA Arbail Shivaram Hebbbar's son Vivek Hebbbar joined the Congress earlier this week. With this, speculation that Hebbbar's support to Congress for the Lok Sabha elections has come to the forefront, and to make it obvious, Hebbbar has gone hammer and tongs against his own partymen.

It appears that Shivaram Hebbbar is daring his party to oust him -- an action he has been waiting for as it does not attract anti-party defection laws. Hebbbar, who joined the BJP in 2018, is tipped to return to the Congress, especially with arch-rival Vishveshwar Hegde Kageri contesting the Lok Sabha elections.

Hebbbar, who had been tight-lipped over whether he would rejoin the Congress, lashed out at his own partymen who taunted him for his stance. Replying to Kageri's jibe that he has left voters confused, he said, "The people here know who did what. He adorned the seat of the Speaker because of my sacrifice. It is because 17 of us resigned and joined the BJP that BS Yediyurappa became chief minister for the fourth time... You could become Speaker. You too enjoyed power because of us." He also taunted Basavaraj Patil Yatnal for his remarks against him. "Whatever you have said against the party in the past one year has caused more damage to the party than my action. Since you do not know the politics of our district, you better shut your mouth," he said.

Both Yatnal and Kageri had lashed out at Hebbbar for not campaigning for the party candidate in Uttara Kannada.

Vivek Hebbbar's entry into the Congress has left the Yellapur BJP baffled as the party in the town will now be left leaderless. It is being read as a masterstroke by Congress leaders who grabbed his opponent VS Patil during the 2023 assembly polls, and now the winner himself is partially in the Congress. However, Shivaram Hebbbar is not making his move yet, as it would attract Section 10 of the Anti-Defection Act, and he can be ousted as an elected representative.

Hebbbar had joined BJP via Operation Lotus with 16 others to topple the Congress-JDS government, and was made labour minister by Yediyurappa, and continued as minister in the Bommai government.



VOTER OUTREACH

BJP candidate from Bangalore South Tejasvi Surya with youth during a 'Run 4 NaMo' event in Bengaluru on Sunday | EXPRESS

Congress accuses BJP worker of influencing VFH, poll officials deny

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE Congress has complained to the Election Commission of India (ECI), accusing a BJP worker of interfering in the vote from home (VFH) exercise, influencing the election officers, and even being present at the time of the voting on Saturday. However, the Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer has refuted the allegations.

VFH in the 14 Lok Sabha constituencies going to polls on April 26 started on April 13. According to the complaint, a BJP worker identified as Kumar is seen entering the house of a voter who had opted for VFH in Ward No. 108 in the Rajajinagar Assembly segment of Bangalore South Lok Sabha constituency along with poll officials.

Reacting to the allegation and the complaint, the Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Manoj Kumar Meena, said on Sunday, "The matter was inquired into in detail, and the returning officer has also submitted a written report. The said person was not present in the area where the voting was being done. Complete secrecy was maintained, and there was no violation of rules set by the ECI."

The CEO office also took to 'X' on Sunday and said, "A complaint was received on alleged violations of secrecy. The entire exercise was videographed and a report from the micro-observers puts the facts: there were no authorised political party agents from any of the political parties present, the

person who is in question is a local and there is no undue influence, secrecy of voting is not violated. The VFH process is duly informed to all political parties and candidates and is conducted with utmost transparency."

An election official, not wanting to be named, explained to *The New Indian Express*, "Just as people were given advance intimation of VFH, political parties were also informed. They have not appointed any representatives. The video, which is being circulated, was given to the CEO office with the complaint. The election officials on the ground have also videographed all that happened inside and outside the house. We agree there was noise and chaos outside, but that is not for us to handle. We were concerned about the voting procedure. It has been videographed, and there was complete secrecy."

The official added that the staffers could file a complaint of harassment from people and party workers. "We were asked to show our ID cards. We were ill-treated while on government duty. One of the staffers ID card had got damaged while moving house to house. The staffers were followed till the cars and ill-treated. There was also a former mayor present in the scene. When people raised questions, another one was immediately arranged. Further, the alleged accused person is entering someone's house, it is for the family members to say who he is and why he is being allowed," the official said.

16,654 voted from home on first day

Bengaluru: As many as 16,654 people, or 34.26%, exercised their franchise across the state on the first day of voting from home on Saturday, according to a report from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka, released on Sunday. In all, 48,609 people aged above 85 years and People with Disabilities (PwD) had opted for VFH by filling Form 12-D. Of the total voters, 15,515 were above 85 years of age (34.11%) and 4,139 (34.72%) were PwD. Vote from home will continue till April 18, said officials. The voting is videographed in the presence of central government officers.

VFH in B'loru

As many as 6,206 people cast their votes from home in three constituencies -- Bangalore North, Bangalore South and Bangalore Central -- on Sunday. Bangalore South had the most voters with 2,523 and 93% of home voting has been completed. In Bangalore Central, there are 1,822 voters and 88.69% of home voting has been completed, and Bangalore North has 2,062 voters with 77.21% of home voting has been completed.

Action will be taken if holidays not given on voting days, says CEO

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

CHIEF Electoral Officer, Karnataka, Manoj Kumar Meena said the government has already declared a holiday on the days of voting in the state -- April 26 and May 7 -- to encourage more people to come out to vote.

"We are also reaching out to private companies, including in the IT sector, asking CEOs and managements to encourage people to vote. If it is found that these firms are not giving holidays to people on the two voting days, action will be taken as per the Labour Act," he said.

Speaking to the media during an interactive session on Sunday, Meena said all efforts are being taken to increase the voting percentage. "We have identified 1,800 polling booths in Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike and 5,000 in state limits where the polling percentage is 35% or less. This includes areas in Kalyana Karnataka, including Bijapur, where migration is an issue. We are appealing to all companies' heads to ask their staffers to vote and make arrangements if needed. Companies should not even ask people to work from home. A holiday means a holiday. If anyone is found violating the government orders, action will be taken," he said.

Meena added: "We are also going door to door encouraging people what to vote. We are also working closely with apartment associations and resident welfare associations. It is a responsible decision a



Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka, Manoj Kumar Meena interacts with the media in Bengaluru on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

person has to take to vote. We cannot force anyone. April 26 is a Friday, so we are appealing to people to first vote and then go for a holiday. In the coming days, we will also visit malls, theatres and other places where crowds gather to explain to people about voting and will put up banners. We have also asked electricity supply corporations (Escoms) and water supply agencies like Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) to send messages to customers, asking and reminding people to vote."

Speaking on the issue of people saying that they will boycott elections if their demands are not met, Meena said whenever such issues come to their notice, a team is immediately sent to the spot. They talk to people and explain to them that boycotting will not help. The citizens are also told about the power of voting. Communication is also made to the agencies concerned and all measures are taken to ensure their problems

are resolved. People usually adhere to the request and agree to vote, Meena said.

On seizures, Meena pointed out that since March 16, when the model code of conduct (MCC) was announced, items worth Rs 355.78 crore have been seized. This is much higher than the 2019 parliamentary elections and the 2023 assembly elections.

Pertaining to increasing security measures, Meena said when elections are being held in Telangana, the border areas of Karnataka are being sealed for security reasons. Similarly when elections are held in Karnataka, border areas to Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra and other areas will be sealed. Special central paramilitary teams from Tamil Nadu are being shifted to Karnataka for election. There is already a list with the CEO of the sensitive areas and booths where special forces will be deployed. Webcasting will also be done in 50% of the booths.



(Compiled by: Rumana UK)

Activist Manoj Jarange on Sunday said that while he has decided to stay away from the Lok Sabha poll fray, the Maratha community members might contest the state Maharashtra assembly elections if they are not provided reservation till June 6. The Lok Sabha polls in the state will be held in five phases from April 19 to May 20. Assembly polls are due later this year.

Anurag Thakur, BJP leader

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INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

40 YEARS OF GRIT AND DETERMINATION TO HOLD SIACHEN GLACIER

APRIL 13 marks a glorious and strategic milestone in the annals of Indian military history. It was the day the Siachen glacier came under decisive Indian control four decades ago through Operation Meghdoot. It brings back memories of humongous determination of our armed forces at the inhospitable terrain around 20,000 ft above sea level, where atmospheric oxygen is thin and night temperature could plummet to minus 40 degree Celsius. In a sudden swoop on April 13, 1984, Indian soldiers occupied almost all peaks and passes in the Saltoro ridge region hours before Pakistan had intended to do so as part of its cartographic aggression. Operation Meghdoot marked the beginning of the longest ongoing military operation in the highest and coldest global battlefield. An estimated 2,000 soldiers on the Indian side have since laid down their lives on Siachen, primarily due to extreme weather conditions. A bilateral truce announced in 2003 notwithstanding, both sides haven't withdrawn their presence there.

Much has changed in Siachen over the years as technological and logistical advancements have helped improve the living conditions of soldiers and given them a better chance to withstand the elements—avalanches, frost bites and other adverse conditions. An extensive network of tracks, all-terrain vehicles, special clothing, and advanced rations, besides heavy-lift helicopters and logistic drones for supplies in otherwise inaccessible areas have enhanced the support system on the icy frontier.

The 40th anniversary of Siachen's control came and went without much attention from the otherwise voluble netas, busy as they are with the ongoing election campaign. Attempts at demilitarising it were made at least thrice—in 1989, 1992 and 2006—but they fell through. Both sides came closest to clinching a deal during UPA-I under Manmohan Singh's watch in 2006, but it was spiked by policy hawk M K Narayanan, the national security advisor of the day. Details of how Narayanan's distrust of Pakistan derailed the initiative were revealed by then foreign secretary Shyam Saran in his 2017 memoir *How India Sees the World*. Siachen and Sir Creek in Gujarat could be the first bilateral friction points that could be resolved if Pakistan were to show real intent to put the terror genie back in the bottle. But expecting that to happen in the short term would be naive.

GOVT MUST PROTECT ANIMALS FROM DROUGHT

It has been a dry and difficult year for most parts of the country, with the vagaries of a whimsical monsoon teaching us a few lessons in austerity. Karnataka, especially Bengaluru city, is on the brink of rationing water, with curbs on using precious potable water for washing cars and watering plants. While the drought has taken a toll on agriculture and left farmers in debt, it has also led to distress among wildlife whose habitats have dry water holes and sparse fodder. It's been a merciless summer without any spring showers—140 dry days on the trot—leading to a heat wave alert. Four elephants have died of heat-related causes and dehydration in the past few days in southern Karnataka, which is an indication of the condition of waterbodies in the forests.

While human beings are banking on technology to keep the water flowing until the situation improves, animals in forests are at the mercy of nature. Drought, and especially lack of water, leads to mass migration among both humans and animals—humans move towards cities in search of livelihood, while animals are forced to travel long distances looking for basic sustenance and water, and often enter human habitations, leading to conflict. The forest department does its bit to ensure that waterholes are filled up by installing solar pumps, which are powered by solar panels to pump water from borewells deep in rural areas and forests. Yet, this is not enough and does not ensure there is adequate fodder for herbivores. Likewise, crop damage across 40 lakh hectares in the past year in Karnataka is bound to lead to a food shortage in the coming seasons, affecting GDP and per capita income.

Conservation experts point out that such animal deaths are an indication that long-term measures are necessary to stave off an impending natural disaster. Humans play a big role in bringing on drought and exacerbating heat conditions by the indiscriminate use of land and water, change of forest land use, deforestation and destruction of catchment areas. It is time to stop and place checks on the exploitation of natural resources and degradation of animal habitats. The authorities have recognised the need for afforestation, with Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah directing the forest department to increase forest regions from 20 percent of the total land area of Karnataka to 33 percent, to prevent extreme weather conditions. While there is good news of a normal monsoon this year, we must not forget the trials of the past year with the first showers.

QUICK TAKE

LOOK EAST, TECHIES

JUST when a weak Western market is forcing tens of thousands of Indian IT workers from their jobs, the Far East is trying to lure them. Japan's cabinet office formulated a plan last week to attract investment and talent to the country's tech industries. It included easing norms for getting a visa and setting up a company. Japan, still nominally the second largest economy in Asia, is socially less accessible than big brother China. Indian workers looking to move east would do well to learn a lesson or two in assimilation from the hundreds of thousands of 'Nikkei Brazilians' who have made Japan their home.

THE recent letter written by 600 lawyers to the Chief Justice of India expressing their "deepest anguish" about the manner in which a "vested interest group" was trying to pressure the judiciary and defame courts on the basis of "frivolous logic and stale political agendas" could not have come at a more appropriate time.

With so many politicians facing the heat because of corruption cases, the signatories to the latest missive to the Chief Justice refer to the "antics" of this group and caution him of the pressure tactics that are most obvious in cases involving corruption and tend to "threaten our democratic fabric".

Taking a cue from the letter by these lawyers, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted to say: "To browbeat and bully others is vintage Congress culture." Five decades ago, they had themselves called for a committed judiciary—"they shamelessly want commitment from others for their selfish interests, but desist from any commitment towards the nation." This may sound harsh to the uninitiated, but for those who have lived through the dreadful Emergency (1975-77), this would be nothing more than a mild admonition.

The prime minister's tweet has indeed triggered a flashback to some appalling events in the 1970s that undermined the judiciary and virtually rendered it incapable of performing its fundamental duty to uphold the constitution at that time. The first of these was former prime minister Indira Gandhi's decision to supersede three judges of the Supreme Court—Justices K S Hegde, J M Shelat and A N Grover—in order to make A N Ray the Chief Justice. The then chief justice, S M Sikri retired on April 25, 1973, a day after the historic judgement in the *Kesavananda Bharati* case, in which the majority declared that parliament cannot alter or abridge the "basic structure" of the constitution. Indira Gandhi was furious with this judgement because it constricted the party's plans to bring in major amendments. So, the three judges were accorded "swift punishment" via supersession on April 26 and Justice Ray, who did not subscribe to the majority decision, was elevated.

The ruthless supersession of three eminent judges had obviously sent its message, as could be seen in the court's majority decision in *ADM Jabalpur vs Shivkant Shukla* (also known as the *Habeas Corpus* case). This case arose when Indira Gandhi imposed the Emergency on June 25, 1975, and got the president to pass an order suspending all fundamen-

Congress actions in the past threatened the independent functioning of the judiciary. Can the pall bearers of democracy in the 1970s pretend to be its standard-bearers in 2024?

THE TROUBLED PAST BETWEEN CONGRESS AND THE JUDICIARY

A SURYA PRAKASH

Vice-Chairman, Executive Council, Prime Ministers Museum and Library, New Delhi



SOURAV ROY

tal rights including the right to life and personal liberty (article 21). This led to a string of petitions challenging the presidential order; all of which were bunched together and heard by a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice Ray and comprising Justices H R Khanna, M H Beg, Y V Chandrachud and P N Bhagwati. Attorney General Niren De told the court that so long as the Emergency was in force, no citizen could seek enforcement of the right to life and personal liberty.

Justice Khanna recounts in his autobiography *Neither Roses nor Thorns* that the other judges on the bench, who used to be vocal about human rights and civil rights, "were sitting tongue-tied" and hearing Niren De in silence, which seemed "rather

ominous". He, therefore, decided to confront the Attorney General and asked him in view of his arguments, would there be no remedy if a police officer, because of personal enmity, killed another man. The Attorney General was absolutely candid in his reply: He told the court that "there would be no judicial remedy in such a case so long as the Emergency lasts". Further, he told Justice Khanna, "It may shock your conscience, it shocks mine, but consistent with my submissions, no proceedings can be taken in a court of law on that score."

However, though it shocked the conscience of the Attorney General, it did not prevent the majority on the bench to deliver what was clearly an unconscionable judgement and declare that citizens had

THE INTEGRAL ROLE OF FOOD IN CULTURE

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE



bette wins 10,000 francs in a lottery, giving her the resources to show her artistry.

If ever a story taught that "the one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them" (Bible, Romans 14:3), it is *Babette's Feast*. It transcends to a meta-



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The story, *Babette's Feast*, is about 'conflicting values, symbolised by food'. It transcends food into a metaphor for God's generosity. This recognition of food as part of God's grace is found in all religions.

phor for God's generosity as the General, the only gourmet at the table, recognises.

This recognition of food as part of God's grace is found in all religions. Since we're sharing *Babette's Feast*, let's look again at the Bible. Jesus drew from a compassionate vision of God, from divine commands as in Deuteronomy 24: 17 - 19: "Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice, or take the cloak of the widow as a pledge. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this. When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner; the fatherless and the widow, so that the Lord your God may

bless you in all the work of your hands."

Bible scholars say that the chief crops in the old Judeo-Christian land were wheat, barley, olives, grapes, lentils, fava beans, chickpeas, onions, leeks, garlic, grapes, dates, apples, melons, pomegranates and figs. The people there also raised cattle, sheep and goats, and fished in the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee. They made wine from grapes and ate unleavened bread. Olive oil, vinegar and a mint-like herb called hyssop were used as flavourings and bean-stews like cholent were made for Sabbath. We know Jesus ate fish because in Luke 24:41 - 43, he asks, "Have you any food here?" "And they gave him a piece of broiled fish. And he took it, and did eat before them."

Jesus is said to have passed bread and wine around the table to his twelve disciples at their last supper together, saying the bread was his body and the wine his blood. This is the origin of Communion, the Christian ritual where the priest administers a wafer and a sip of wine to each believer in symbolic union with Christ.

Jesus called himself "the true vine" in John 15:1 - 6 and said in John 6:35, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

Such belief leads to grace even if we pray differently or are different, as witnessed in this story. A blind old man was tottering uphill to the temple at Tirupati. Some passersby could not resist asking him the obvious question. "We are climbing for Balaji's *darshan*. Why are you bothering to make the effort when you can't see?" they joked, not out of malice but with the unthinking condescension that is often handed out to those who don't get to tick all the boxes. The old man knew how to answer them. A radiant smile swept across his wrinkled face and he said, "So what if I can't see the Lord? He can see me."

With both fasting and feasting thick this month, does it not seem like a message from on high to show grace to each other? Because the Lord sees us?

(Views are personal) (shehaba09@gmail.com)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Individualised politics

Ref: E24: Seeking mandate for me and myself (Apr 14). We can clearly see a shift towards individual supremacy in Indian politics. Our political and cultural future will be significantly shaped by the results of the coming polls, which will also reflect the worldwide trend toward individualised ideology.

Ashribad Sahu, Rayagada

Coalition pioneer

Ref: The choice—the repeat of 2014-24 or throwback to 1989-98? (Apr 14). The author should have included Manmohan Singh's regime of 2004-14 also. He is the pioneer of coalition governance in India. Though he had a few setbacks, he successfully completed his 10-year regime. In the US-India nuclear deal, he threatened to resign if he was not given freedom to complete it. India needs such a leader.

P Victor Selvaraj, Palayamkottai

Forward, backward?

The author put forth his arguments quite convincingly. But what struck me is, many Modi supporters themselves do not highlight these points in their electioneering speeches. The INDIA leaders loudly raise local issues, drowning the BJP's voice. The choice is clear: Should we move fast forward to the future or backwards to the past?

V Janakiraman, Tiruvallur

Talk policy

The INDI Alliance should think twice before spreading falsehoods along the lines of Modi being a 'dictator'. One wonders if they will elaborate on their own policy instead of continuously just badmouthing their opponent.

DS Pillai, Chittoor

'Health' products

The Indian Medical Association filed a case against Patanjali for misleading advertisements on their products and the Supreme Court rightly admonished them. But there are products like Bournvita and others that claim to be health products, which is not correct. The SC should take up the case suo moto.

P Venkateshwar Rao, Hyderabad

Global turmoil

While the proxy war between Iran and Israel over the years itself had global ramifications, an eye to eye confrontation may subvert the regional stability in West Asia and may have an adverse spillover effect. No country is insulated or isolated from global turmoil. Rather than escalating the conflict, global powers organisations like the UN must work to avert the war.

M Rishidev, Dindigul



Abhishek Singhvi @DrAMSinghvi
My heart was pained not to see Nitin Gadkari on the stage during launch of manifesto. Is this an indication that he is going to be sidelined after elections?



Akhilesh Yadav @yadavakhilesh
When the people have taken a pledge to make India alliance win and defeat BJP, then BJP's 'Sankalp Patra' is of no use.



Mallikarjun Kharge @kharge
No accountability for old guarantees, just empty juggling of words! 'Modi Ki Guarantee' means warranty of Jumbal

'RESULTS WILL BE SHOCKER FOR BJP'

Congress leader Sachin Pilot speaks on a range of issues in elections in the 16th edition of Delhi Dialogues

SHAHID FARIDI: We have among us for this edition of Delhi Dialogues, the rising star of the Congress Party, Sachin Pilot. He's a rising star at a time when most of the stars of his age and his party have turned into shooting stars. The BJP is working overtime to tell the country that the sun has set on the grand old party that is Congress to which he belongs. Sachin Pilot, unlike the other leaders of his age and his party who became ministers in the Manmohan Singh government in 2009, doesn't come from a royal family background. His father was a first-generation politician who made a mark for himself with his hard work and honesty. Sachin has inherited the exceptional quality of his father of connecting with the people. He became an MP, and he was probably the youngest at that time in 2004 when he was elected from Dausa. Then he was given charge of the state Congress when the party was routed in Rajasthan and could win only 21 seats out of 200. He worked hard for five years, campaigned in Rajasthan, and the party returned to power in 2018.

SACHIN PILOT: Thank you very much for inviting me. Maybe 10, 15, or 20 years ago, one would not have thought that our polity would be where it is today. So much has happened so quickly. We have to embrace ourselves to see what the next few months and years have ahead of us. We are in the middle of elections; it's even more interesting to be having a conversation with all of you.

PRABHU CHAWLA: The oft-used word in Congress circles is 'counting'. What exactly do you count? How many people have left the party and how many more will leave? Or something else?

Many people harbour such a misunderstanding. The import-export of leaders is common when we are fighting an election. It has become so rampant that people now have become immune to it. But when a leader leaves a party, all his voters and supporters don't leave.

Secondly, this election is far more than just a count. It has now become much more decisive and pivotal for many reasons. Opposition unity is crucial now.

PRABHU CHAWLA: The reality is that you are not



able to find enough candidates...

How many candidates does the BJP have in the North-East, Tamil Nadu and Kerala? The comparison should be fair. We have our own winning candidates. In Haryana, 6 out of 10 BJP candidates are former Congressmen.

PRABHU CHAWLA: Is your party not battle-ready?

That is not true. Ultimately we fight elections to win. It is the people who decide. I cannot hold a grudge against the people of India because they didn't vote for us. I have to perform better, strive better and then achieve success. The results of both Lok Sabha and Assembly elections will be a shocker for BJP. If BJP was so confident about getting 400-plus seats and supremely happy with their incumbents, why were they importing people from other parties, including the Congress? We will definitely do better this time. The Lok Sabha results will be shocker for BJP.

PRABHU CHAWLA: What does 'better' mean - from 52 to 104?

The PM keeps citing figures like 400-plus. I won't take that liberty. I just feel that the INDIA alliance will get the required mandate to be able to form the government.

PRABHU CHAWLA: The Congress has gone through many changes. Earlier old people were thrown out but under the current regime, young people are leaving the party...

I hold no brief for anybody. You must ask people who have joined or have left. Some people may have left under compulsion, pressure or out of hunger for power, I don't know. Everyone is free to make the choice and the ideological path is theirs to follow. But the final judge is the people of India. In the same vein, the BJP has expelled Jaswant Singh, Uma Bharti and Kalyan Singh. What did they do to LK Advani?

SHAHID FARIDI: The Congress lost the last two Lok Sabha elections badly. What is the compelling narrative this time?

First thing is how institutions are really losing their independence and credibility. Look at the way the election commissioner is being chosen. First it was the CJI, PM and the leader of opposition. Now the CJI has been replaced with a cabinet minister.

PREETHA: In states like MP and Rajasthan, many Congress members have joined BJP recently. How will you address the organizational decay?

Some people having left the Congress party will not affect the psyche of the voter. Out of 25 seats in Rajasthan, we got a zero in 2019 and 2014. The positive way to look at it is we can only grow. We can't go less than that. I think there's a change happening. We have a fierce contest in more than half the seats. I've seen the change in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana and Rajasthan. UP, Bihar, Bengal, Maharashtra are also very important.

So our alliances in Bihar and Maharashtra are formidable. And I think that's what BJP's worry is. If you add numbers, NDA got 35-36% vote. We got 65% of the vote. The BJP revised the NDA only after the INDIA Alliance came into being.

KETAN TANNA: Congress leaders have questioned the use of EVMs. Do you feel the EVMs can be manipulated?

It's a very controversial thing because it's gone to courts. There are certain views on it. I feel that it is the job of the Election Commission to clear all doubts. If someone has a doubt on VVPAT, the percentage, the slips, any technical doubt must be cleared for getting people's full credibility behind the process. Even if one voter feels that there is something that can go wrong, EC should clarify and make everything above board.

PREETHA: Your critics say Congress often fails to mount an ideological challenge to Hindutva forces and adopts a compromising approach. Rahul Gandhi held a roadshow in Wayanad without any flags as it was wary of displaying its ally Muslim League's flag...

If someone is trying to use an event, religion, or God, to his or her advantage, that's up to them. I think the state has a different role to play. A state is run by the Constitution and it is agnostic to religion and personal likes and dislikes.

PREETHA: IUML is an old ally...

The UDF alliance in Kerala is 30 years old and nothing has changed since then. But people see new connotations now.

SANTWANA BHATTACH-ARYA: You are talking about participatory democracy. The last years of the UPA government saw policy paralysis, and questions about decision-making...

Let's not forget our government was a coalition government. There were pressures. In the end, the narrative in the media did become that their decision-making was not as smooth as it should be. But now we have the complete opposite. I don't think there's much discussion in the cabinet or open-hearted exchanges of ideas. They made the three farm laws and how many people died... Then they withdrew them. So, that sort of opaque decision-making is also not good.

SANTWANA BHATTACH-ARYA: Why can't Congress get the narrative right to attract young voters?

The second part of the answer is that the good part of the technology is that it's open source. With AI, I can do data mining; I can do a lot many things in comparison to my competition. The difference is how much resource I can deploy. That is the factor of influence, but it's changed a lot. You can push a campaign, your presence; and your narrative can be more proliferating. It is both good and bad because you are not able to compete. After all, it is all commercial. The lack of funds is another issue.

RUMANA: Rajasthan politics has always been a binary between BJP and Congress. This time, you merged your vote bank with smaller parties like the CPM and RLP. What is the difference you expect to come out?

Out of 25, we have given two seats to each of our allies in the state. CPM is our national ally and RLP is a regional party that had a coalition with the BJP in 2019 but fell out during farmers' agitation where it supported Congress' stance. We have a very good contest on over half the seats and I'm hoping to gain at least that much.

SANTWANA BHATTACH-ARYA: There is a sudden focus on southern states by the BJP. The controversy of Katchatheevu is the latest example. Why has the Congress not been able to counter it properly?

It was a bilateral agreement with Sri Lanka about a small territory done 60 years ago. Such agreements have happened in the Modi govt also which the public doesn't know about. With Bangladesh, some land areas were exchanged. Raking up a controversy about international agreements to fulfill BJP's Mission South will not bear any fruit.

POWER GAMES



SHAHID FARIDI
The writer is Resident Editor
TNE, New Delhi.
Follow him on X @ShahidFaridi.

Battleground Haryana

CONG PRESSES BIG GUNS INTO ELECTORAL ARENA

The Congress leadership has swung into action to get its prominent leaders across the country to fight the current Lok Sabha elections. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP firing all cylinders to score a hat-trick at the helm of power, prominent Congress leaders have been shying away from joining the battle against them. This is in spite of the express orders from the party leadership to fight the election. A tussle is being witnessed between the Congress central leadership and its prominent faces on this issue. After failing to force its top two leaders of Rajasthan - Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot - to contest, the leadership has put its foot down in Haryana, a state from where the party is getting positive feedback on its prospects. The Congress central election committee has met twice, but failed to finalise candidates for Haryana. Former state chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda and his son Deependra refused to contest from Rohtak, which is considered their pocket borough. They had suggested their wives as possible candidates. But the leadership has rejected their proposal and asked Deependra to fight from Rohtak. According to sources, the party has also finalised the candidature of former state president Kumari Selja from Sirsa and Varun Chaudhary from Ambala. Varun is a sitting MLA and his father, Phool Chand Mulana, was a state Congress president. The party has also reportedly finalised Brijendra Singh's name for the Hissar Lok Sabha seat in spite of Bhupinder Hooda's strong opposition. With the state Congress leaders locked in a factional feud over the remaining seats, the central leadership has set up a three-member committee of K C Venugopal, Salman Khurshid and Madhusudan Mistry to bring about a rapprochement. The committee met on Sunday with leaders of different groups and is likely to finalise the names by Monday.



Battle for ballot

BAGHEL PLANS TO FORCE EC INTO PAPER VOTING

Former chief minister of Chhattisgarh Bhupesh Baghel plans to force the Election Commission's hand to conduct the election in Rajnandgaon using paper ballot. Baghel is contesting the Lok Sabha election from Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh. According to sources, over four hundred candidates are likely to file nominations in Rajnandgaon which will make it impossible for the commission to conduct the election using the electronic voting machines. One EVM or a balloting unit can handle 16 candidate choices. In constituencies where there are more than 16 candidates, the EC installs a parallel unit. Additional parallel units are installed depending on the number of candidates. But there is a limit on the number of EVMs the EC can place parallelly. The jury is out on this number. As per the recently-updated FAQs of the EC, the newly-upgraded EVMs can handle up to 384 candidates by placing 24 parallel units. Bhupesh and his team believe that the EC will have no option but to conduct the election using ballot paper if there are more than 400 candidates in a constituency. A Lok Sabha constituency usually has around 1500 polling booths. Providing such a large number of EVMs will be another challenge for the EC. It will be interesting to see which way this battle for the ballot goes.



BJP promises three more bullet train corridors

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @New Delhi

THE BJP manifesto released on Sunday promised three more bullet train corridors in the country apart from expanding coverage of new-age trains.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while releasing the BJP's Lok Sabha manifesto, said the work on the first corridor, which will connect Ahmedabad to Mumbai, is almost complete and the survey work for three more corridors will begin soon. "We are constructing the first Bullet Train corridor in the country. Using the experience gained so far, we will initiate feasibility studies for Bullet Train Corridors in North, South, and East India," the BJP's manifesto states.

The saffron party, seeking a third consecutive term for PM Modi, says that its government has developed and manufactured world-class Vande Bharat, Amrit Bharat, and Namo Bharat trains.

The BJP manifesto has accorded top priority to a slew of railway projects if it is voted to power for a third term at the Centre. Released as 'Modi Ki Guarantee', the manifesto pledged for constructing new tracks to expand capacity as well cargo transportation. It mentions that 31,000 km railway tracks were built in the last 10 years and now it would add 5000 km of new railway tracks every year for next five years after coming in the third



Vow to increase train ticket availability

In the backdrop of heavy wait lists in trains, the BJP has pledged to increase ticket availability significantly increasing passenger carrying capacity by 2030. It promised to carry on expansion of Kavach train protection system in a mission mode in next five years. The PM quoting from the manifesto said 1300 railway stations will be re-developed to world class standards in major and medium-sized cities.

term of power.

In the backdrop of heavy waitlists in trains, the BJP has pledged to increase ticket availability significantly increasing passenger carrying capacity by 2030. The BJP also promised to carry on expansion of Kavach train protection system in a mission mode in next five years. The PM quoting from the manifesto said 1300 railway stations will be re-developed to world class standards in major and medium-sized cities. The manifesto promised to expand services of high frequency trains for regional connectivity and metro network in major urban

centres ensuring last mile connectivity. "We will launch Vande Sleeper trains for a comfortable overnight journey," Modi said, adding that his government will also launch Vande Bharat Metro. "We have commissioned sections of RRTS between Delhi and Meerut. We will further expand these services and launch other regional connectivity programmes to other major cities to ensure robust connectivity and integrate the regional economies."

It has been promised in the manifesto to launch a Super App to provide all train-related services to users.

Not Vishwaguru but a 'bandhu' in global arena

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @New Delhi

MAKING a change in its claim to be a Vishwaguru, the BJP manifesto promised that the party-led government will conduct policies to further India's interests "with the spirit of Vishwa Bandhu Bharat" (kinsman of the universe).

India will work to emerge as a voice of Global South by following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 5S - Samman, Samvad, Sahyog, Shanti and Samridhi. "We will further promote Bharat's reputation as a trusted global partner and a first respondent continuing our humanitarian assistance and disaster relief programs," the manifesto said.

The BJP pledged that it is committed to seeking permanent membership in the UN Security Council to elevate Bharat's position in global decision-making. The government will continue to make all efforts to create a consensus among all members of UN on a Comprehensive Convention against Intentional Terrorism.

"We will build upon the success of the 'No Money for Terror' conference to develop better coordination of countering terrorism financing," it said.

Lack of leadership in pro-Khalistani ranks: Intel report

MUKESH RANJAN @New Delhi

AT a time when several overseas anti-India elements have been eliminated by unknown attackers across the globe, intelligence reports to the Government of India suggested that there is a dilemma among the pro-Khalistani entities, as only a very few are in favour of adopting violent means to take forward their cause citing leadership vacuum.

In the reports both the internal and external spy agencies of India have mentioned that PKEs are struggling to get a credible leadership.

Sources said that in an analysis of the reports submitted by the intelligence agencies, it has come to light that several meetings were held in the US and Canada to identify potential leaders, who could carry on anti-India activities across various countries.

During the course of such meetings it was felt that except for the designated terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, new faces need to be brought to the front to carry out activities in different countries, intelligence agencies said.

The reports were also indicative of the fact that there existed disunity among the PKEs, as only a few Khalistani sympathisers appeared to be in favour of staging violent protests during a recent gathering outside a venue visited by Indian diplomats, citing absence of strong leadership, sources said.

However, the reports indicated that Pakistan-backed terror groups have intensified their efforts to rope in individuals to further the Khalistan agenda, particularly in the UK and Canada, amid reported differences among supporters during protests in Toronto and Surrey.

Meanwhile, the agencies have closely been monitoring the activities of such elements and have warned India's diplomatic community against violent anti-India activities outside Indian consulates by pro-Khalistani elements.

Intelligence agencies have also expressed their concerns over human trafficking efforts perpetrated by the pro-Khalistani elements, they said.

CJI: Ambedkar's message remains relevant today

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY

@New Delhi

CHIEF Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Sunday paid floral tributes to B R Ambedkar, the architect of the country's Constitution, on his birth anniversary.

"This is a very special day for all of us. Ambedkar was the architect of our Constitution who brought about a complete social transformation. And his message continues to be as valid today as it was when he was drafting the Indian Constitution," the CJI said.

The CJI offered floral tributes at the statue of Ambedkar in Supreme Court premises.

The event was organised by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA). Several lawyers and other dignitaries also paid their tributes to the great architect of the Constitution.

Corrigendum

In Part 2 of S Gurumurthy's column (April 14), the US tally of Covid fatalities under the subhead Modi 2.0 had a typographical error.

The correct figure is 12 million. Also, the seventh sentence under the subhead Vision for 2047, should read "On the other hand, if as is now expected, Russia wins the Ukraine war..." and not as published. The errors are regretted.

Between the two seats — Arunachal West and Arunachal East — a straight contest is expected between the BJP, which governs the frontier state, and the Congress

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @Guwahti

ARUNACHAL Pradesh will go to parliamentary elections in the backdrop of a Christian organisation's open declaration of support for the Congress and an anti-incumbency wave. The state has two seats — Arunachal East and Arunachal West. A straight contest is expected between the BJP, which rules the frontier state, and the Congress.

The BJP's Arunachal West candidate and Union minister Kiren Rijiju is seeking a fourth term. He is pitted against former Chief Minister Nabam Tuki of the Congress among others. In the Arunachal East seat, sitting MP and the BJP candidate Tapir Gao's main rival is the Congress' Bosiram Siram who is a former minister.

The BJP, which has a solid base in the state, appears to be ahead in the race but a recent diktat by the Arunachal Christian Forum (ACF) has left the party concerned about its prospects. In a March 26 circular, the ACF had listed six issues to back its "ongoing democratic movement against the present

ARUNACHAL WEST

ASSEMBLY
SEGMENTS
33

LS ELECTIONS
HELD SINCE 1977
12

PARTY REPRESENTATION
07 Congress 03 BJP
01 Arunachal Congress 01 Independent



Winner in 2019: Kiren Rijiju, BJP
Candidates for the 2024 polls: 8

INCUMBENT RIJIJU FACES FORMER CM NABAM TUKI OF CONGRESS, ACTIVIST TOKO SHEETAL OF GANA SURAKSHA PARTY AND FIVE INDEPENDENTS

VOTE SHARE

INCREASED FROM 50.46% IN 2014 TO 63.02% IN 2019

DECREASED FROM 38.02% IN 2014 TO 14.22% IN 2019

INDIA

ARUNACHAL EAST

ASSEMBLY
SEGMENTS
27

LS ELECTIONS
HELD SINCE 1977
12



Candidate who won in 2019: Tapir Gao, BJP
Candidates for the 2024 polls: 6

INCUMBENT TAPIR GAO FACES BOSIRAM SIRAM OF CONGRESS AND FOUR OTHERS, INCLUDING 3 INDEPENDENTS

CONGRESS SHARE DIPPED FROM 45.33% IN 2014 TO 28.57% IN 2019

PARTY REPRESENTATION
07 Congress 02 BJP
02 Independents 01 Arunachal Cong

EAST OR WEST, BJP FACES A TOUGH TEST

regime". The issues include the government's alleged move to repeal the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act of 1978 and withdraw the Scheduled Tribe status to the Christians.

In another circular issued on April 3, the ACF had urged all its member and denominational organizations to work for the two Congress candidates and extend full support to them. The forum warned of necessary steps against any member found working against its official decision.

There are two factors why the BJP will not be able to perform like it had in 2019. One is anti-incumbency and the other is the religious factor. I feel there will be a strong contest in both seats

Prof Nani Bath of the Rajiv Gandhi University, political scientist

Christians account for more than 30.26% of the state's population and the BJP's fear is about the possible polarisation of Christian votes in the Congress' favour.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu had slammed the Congress for allegedly playing the religious card and expressed concern over the "politicization of religion". The BJP is banking on

the development initiatives of the central and state governments. The Centre is undertaking a series of infrastructure development projects along the Line of Actual Control to improve border security.

Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Sela Tunnel in the Tawang district. It will ensure all-weather connectivity to Ta-

wang and the forward areas, and facilitate smoother movement of troops.

With the polls drawing near, the general perception among the voters is that the Congress will give the BJP a run for its money.

Speaking at a recent rally, Rijiju advised people not to waste their votes. He outlined the central government's plans to boost the state's agriculture and horticulture sectors. Tuki is confident people want change. He claimed

that he was getting a good response from the voters wherever he was going.

The people in the state are expecting a neck and neck contest also in the Arunachal East seat. The sitting MP Gao is facing the charge of non-performance. His advantage is that he is more visible than his Congress rival Siram on social media.

Prof Nani Bath of the Rajiv Gandhi University felt the BJP will win both seats but by smaller margins of votes com-

pared to those of the 2019 elections.

"There are two factors why the BJP will not be able to perform like it had in 2019. One is anti-incumbency and the other is the religious factor. I feel there will be a strong contest in both seats," the political scientist said.

"Infrastructure development is happening in all parts of Arunachal but people do not vote on that consideration. Looking at the overall national scenario, people consider the BJP as anti-Christian. They were not allowed to construct a church in Tawang," he added.

Simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections will be held in the state on April 19.



ELECTION 2024

Black flags waved at BJP candidate

Farmers waved black flags at BJP candidate from Patiala Lok Sabha seat, Preeti Kaur and raised slogans against the BJP-led government at the Centre while she was addressing party workers at Samana town on Sunday. Farmers owing allegiance to Bharti Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan) and Kirti Kisan Union held a stir against Kaur.

Crowdfunding by Cong candidate

Congress candidate from Gujarat's Banaskantha Lok Sabha seat, Geniben Thakor, has been seeking monetary support from people in the constituency to fund her poll campaign expenses. Thakor, the sitting Congress MLA from Vav in Banaskantha district, claimed she has received an overwhelming response for crowdfunding her campaign.

AMBEDKAR JAYANTI

Mayawati seeks statehood for west UP's Harit Pradesh

NAMITA BAJPAI @Lucknow

CHOOSING the birth anniversary day of her ideologue Dr BR Ambedkar, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati made a major announcement of according statehood to western UP and also establishing a bench of Allahabad High Court in the region if voted to power at the centre.

While addressing a poll rally in Muzaffarnagar, the BSP chief raked up the long-pending 'Harit Pradesh' issue yet again. Significantly, it was Dr Ambedkar who had proposed the division of UP into three separate states — Western, Central and Eastern — for better governance.

She launched a broadside on arch rival Samajwadi Party (SP) saying that the brotherhood and amity was buried in western UP when the SP was in power whereas the BSP rule never witnessed a communal flare-up in western UP.

The BSP chief slammed both the Congress and the BJP for policies favouring the capitalists and big corporate houses. "These parties don't have Dalits, tribals and the deprived in their agenda of development," she said.



Notably, the BSP is going it alone in the elections keeping both the ruling and the Opposition blocs at equal distance. In Muzaffarnagar, she has fielded Dara Singh Prajapati against BJP's Sanjeev Balyan who is seeking the third term from the constituency and SP's Harendra Mallik, a former MP and a prominent Jat leader.

Earlier, commencing her party's campaign from Saharanpur, the parliamentary constituency number 1, which the BSP had won in 2019, Mayawati claimed that it would not be easy for the ruling BJP to return to power because of the contradiction in their words and deeds.

She accused the BJP of lying to the public and working in the interest of the powerful.

SP fields NHRM scam tainted minister

Springing a surprise, the Samajwadi Party (SP), on Sunday, named former minister Babu Singh Kushwaha who heads Jan Adhikar Party, as candidate to contest from Jaunpur Lok Sabha seat on a Samajwadi Party symbol. Besides, Kushwaha, the SP also announced names of six more candidate including Amarnath Maurya from Phulpur, Ram Shiromani Verma from Shravasti, Bhishm Shanker 'Kushal' Tewari from Doorniyaganj, Laxmikant alias Pappu Nishad from Sant Kabir Nagar, Ramashanker Rajbhar from Salempur and Supriya Saroj from Machlisahar Lok Sabha seat.

CHHATTISGARH

Maoists will be ousted in 3 yrs, SC/ST quota to stay, says Shah

EJAZ RA KAISER @Raipur

UNION home minister Amit Shah on Sunday said that the menace of Maoists in Chhattisgarh will get eliminated in the next three years if the BJP is voted to power led by PM Narendra Modi.

Addressing a poll rally at Khairagarh in Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha constituency, Shah accused the Congress of spreading lies that Modi will abolish the Constitution and the reservations policy will be terminated. Rajnandgaon is cited as the BJP's citadel where the former CM Bhupesh Baghel is pitted against the saffron party's sitting Lok Sabha member Santosh Pandey.

"As long as BJP remains in politics, we will not allow the reservations for dalits, tribals or backward classes to end. Today is the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar. We cannot forget his work towards upliftment of dalits, backwards, tribals and poor. But the Congress continues to spread canards. After losing Assembly polls for Congress, Baghel is yet again in the fray. The people should now defeat him with a bigger margin", Shah said.

During his speech, he congratulated the chief minister Vishnu Deo Sai and the state home minister Vi-

jay Sharma for eliminating over 53 Maoists besides 150 cadres arrested and more than 250 surrendered during a short span after the fight against the left-wing extremists intensified. "The campaign against the Maoists had weakened under the Bhupesh Baghel government", he added. Chhattisgarh remains the worst Maoist-hit state.

Shah said that the nation has never witnessed any scam committed in the name of a God (Mahadev). "Baghel didn't spare the name of Mahadev (in reference to Mahadev online betting app probed by agencies) and a scam of ₹508 crore committed under his tenure. In Chhattisgarh there have been several scams in coal levy, public service commission, liquor, district mineral funds, ration, Gauthan, sand among others. With so many scams committed during his regime, Baghel has now come to Rajnandgaon to contest polls", he stated.

Citing the achievements of the Modi government on Article 370, Ayodhya Ram temple, against terrorism, Shah claimed the country now has been secured and strengthened. Shah also talked about the BJP manifesto highlighting uniform civil code, one nation one election, all elderly to get medical benefits as he exhorted the people to vote for his party.



'Will implement UCC under Modi'

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said the BJP will never allow reservations to end and nor will it let Congress do so. Speaking on the BJP's manifesto released earlier in the day, he said when Narendra Modi becomes PM for the third time, UCC will be implemented and 'One Nation One Election' will be introduced. Shah asked people to give Modi a third term as prime minister to eliminate Naxalism can be eliminated.

UTTARAKHAND

BJP fights for prestige on its turf as son of former CM locks horns with ex-CM

NARENDRA SETHI @Dehradun

HARIDWAR in Uttarakhand, renowned for its spiritual significance, is poised to witness a keen electoral battle. Virendra Rawat, son of former Congress CM Harish Rawat, who is making his political debut, has been pitted against former BJP CM Trivendra Rawat in Haridwar, which will go to polls on April 19 on the first phase.

According to the poll data, the BJP has a strong track record in this constituency, having secured victory six times from 1977 to 2019, with one win each for the BLD, JNP-S, and Samajwadi Party.

The Congress last emerged victorious in Haridwar in 2009. As the BJP aims for a hat-trick of wins, the Congress is optimistic of repeating a victory

Key issues

Power crisis and Ganga conservation are key issues in the constituency, according to analysts. Despite being an energy state, frequent power cuts in Haridwar have affected the general public as well as the industrial sector.

after 15 years.

In the last two consecutive elections, the BJP secured over 50 per cent of the votes and elected Ramesh Pokhriyal as the MP. Harish Rawat's wife, Renuka Rawat, had lost the election from here in 2014.

Harish Rawat, who was MP from here in 2009, had expressed his unwillingness to contest the election and got his

son a ticket and started campaigning for it.

"The Congress is not just pitted against the BJP; there is a larger battle unfolding where the public stands in opposition to the BJP, a contest that has captured everyone's attention," Harish Rawat told this newspaper.

Power crisis and Ganga conservation are key issues in the constituency, according to analysts. Despite being an energy state, frequent power cuts in Haridwar have affected the general public as well as the industrial sector.

Ganga conservation movement against pollution and illegal mining on the riverbed, incomplete highway, payment of dues of sugarcane farmers, and lack of adequate security arrangements for flood-affected areas are other key issues.

MUKESH RANJAN @Ranchi

A statement by a few JMM MLAs has sparked speculations about the possible change of guard soon before or after the Gandey by-election in Jharkhand. Giridih MLA Sudivya Kumar Sonu, who is said to be close to former CM Hemant Soren, had said during a meeting of workers at Gandey that they are not going to elect an MLA only, but a leader equivalent to the Chief Minister.

"If Kalpana madam is elected MLA from here then what has not happened in the last 75 years will happen in merely four months.... You are not going to elect an MLA but a leader equivalent to a CM," said the JMM MLA Sudivya Kumar Sonu. This is what needs to be said in public," he added.

AICC general secretary and Jharkhand in-charge Ghulam Ahmed Mir has already termed Kalpana Soren as a "CM material" saying that the BJP will pay a heavy price for its "injus-



tices" meted out to political leaders and people.

Meanwhile, the aggression with which CM Champai Soren was counting the achievements of Hemant Soren Soren Government was put on halt all of a sudden and he went on a 3-day visit to his Assembly constituency despite the fact that the party has already announced its candidates for four Lok Sabha seats. Such incidents also give boost to the speculation that something is being cooked inside the JMM.

Meanwhile, Kalpana Soren has already taken charge of the party in the absence of her husband and will be a star campaigner for the JMM and INDIA Bloc in Jharkhand. Efforts are also on to keep her at the centre-stage through 'Nyay Ulgulan Rally' to be held at Prabhat Tara Maidan in Ranchi on April 21.

Kalpana Soren has been making all arrangements for the rally leaving behind all the senior party leaders, including CM Champai Soren. According

to party sources, personal invitations are being sent by Kalpana Soren to each of these leaders and she is also coordinating with them at personal level to make this rally a grand success.

Recently, Kalpana Soren also released the agenda for the proposed 'Nyay Ulgulan Rally' on Hemant Soren's social media account, saying that it will be against dictatorship, donation thieves, electoral bond loot, and those who loot water, forest and land, against tribal opponents, Dalit opponents, backward opponents, minority opponents.

The proposed rally will also denounce selling of government assets to private entities, against unemployment and inflation, she said.

Kalpana Soren, who projected herself as the JMM leader during the concluding ceremony of 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' in Mumbai on March 17 is said to have been taking almost all key decisions in the party.



Four dead after a train collided with a pickup van in the US state of Idaho



Beijing	24	11	SNY	Los Angeles	20	11	LR
Colombo	32	26	TDS	Melbourne	20	9	LC
Dhaka	37	27	LC	Moscow	17	10	HR
Dubai	33	23	LC	New York	28	19	SNY
Houston	27	22	LC	Singapore	30	27	TDS
Istanbul	24	16	SNY	Toronto	15	5	LC
London	11	7	LR	Washington	29	13	LC

LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain
TDS: Thunderstorm • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

No counterattack, Biden tells Netanyahu after Iran's strike

Iran's first-ever direct assault on Israel marks major escalation in their long-running covert war

WASHINGTON/JERUSALEM

THE United States does not want to see an escalation of the crisis in West Asia, a top White House official said on Sunday after Israel repelled a massive missile and drone attack from its arch-nemesis Iran.

"We don't want to see this escalate," White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said on NBC's *Meet the Press*. "We're not looking for a wider war with Iran."

Israel was on high alert on Sunday after Iran's unprecedented attack sparked fears of a broader conflict.

Iran launched its first-ever direct assault on Israeli territory late Saturday in retaliation for a deadly strike by Israeli on Tehran's consulate in Damas-



Displaced Palestinians take the coastal Rashid route to return to Gaza City on Sunday | AFP

cus on April 1.

Iran's retaliation marked a major escalation of the long-running covert war between the regional foes.

US President Joe Biden has reaffirmed Washington's "iron-clad" support for its ally Israel, while appearing to guide its staunch ally away from a military response. News outlet *Axi* said the president had told Netanyahu he would oppose an Israeli counterattack against Iran and that the prime minister should "take the win".

Kirby added in the interview that the United States is "staying vigilant" to any Iranian threats to American troops.

"We made it very clear to all parties, including Iran, what we would do ... and also how seriously we would take any potential threats to our personnel," Kirby said.

Iran launched more than 300 drones and missiles towards Israel late Saturday, injuring 12 people, the Israeli army said. But almost all were intercepted before they reached Israeli territory, the army said, with help from the United States, Jordan, Britain and other allies.

Meanwhile, Iran's foreign minister on Sunday said Tehran had informed the US and gave a 72-hour warning to neighbouring countries of its retaliatory attack on Israel. "We announced... to the White House in a message that our operations will be limited, minimal and will be aimed at punishing the Israeli regime," said Hossein Amir-Abdollahian.

Amir-Abdollahian said Iran had informed neighbouring countries of its planned retaliatory attack "72 hours before the operation".



TOLL SO FAR

34,194*

Thousands of Gazans set off for north

Thousands of Gazans flooded the coast road north on Sunday after hearing that several people managed to cross a closed checkpoint towards Gaza City. An AFP journalist saw mothers holding their children's hands and families piling onto donkey carts with their luggage as they made the journey. They hoped to cross a military checkpoint on Al-Rashid road south of Gaza City, but the Israeli army told AFP that reports the route was open were "not true".

ISRAEL: A RELIEF AMID WAR'S SLOW PROGRESS IN GAZA

Israel was able to successfully put to the test its aerial defense array, which blocked 99 per cent of the projectiles and prevented any major damage

The response to Iran's attack could be what restores faith in the country's military, even as its forces are bogged down in Gaza, more than six months after Israel declared war on Hamas there

WEST ASIA ON EDGE, BUT ALL SIDES SCORE GAINS

Iran, Israel, the United States and Hamas have all walked away with some gains



A man walks through an empty street in Jerusalem | AFP

HAMAS: THE ULTIMATE WINNER?

At the very least, Iran's attack may have emboldened Hamas to dig in its heels in current negotiations over a cease-fire, hoping the increased military pressure on Israel might lead it to accept the militant group's harder-line terms for a deal

IRAN CONVEYS A MESSAGE

With its strike, Iran was able to exhibit its fierce firepower, instill fear in some Israelis and disrupt the lives of many through school cancellations. But with little damage actually caused in Israel, Iran might hope that any response will be measured

U.S. SHOWS IT IS A DEPENDABLE ALLY

The US was a key player in repelling the assault, demonstrating to its allies around the world the power and reliability of American support

As Israel mulls how and whether to respond, that alliance will be put to the test, with the Biden administration seeking to exert its leverage on Israel and prevent it from carrying out a strong response

Iranians torn between fear and pride after missile attack on Israel



Demonstrators wave Iranian and Palestinian flags as they gather in front of the British Embassy in Tehran on Sunday | AFP

TEHRAN

IRANIANS were torn between a fear of war and pride at Iran's military capabilities, after Tehran's unprecedented attack on Israel in retaliation for the deadly strike on its Damascus consulate.

"It is normal to be worried in this situation, whether from a social or economic point of view," said 47-year-old Jafari, an employee with Iran's judiciary who did not give his full name. "But the fact that Iran has been able to reach this level of special ability... is a matter of pride," he told AFP in downtown Tehran.

On Sunday, Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) announced it had launched hundreds of drones as well as missiles towards military sites in Israel.

Among the main targets were an intelligence centre and an air base in the Negev desert, which Tehran says was used by Israel to strike Iran's consulate in Damascus on April 1. Iran had vowed to avenge the strike on its diplomatic mission, which killed seven guards including two generals from the Quds Force, the foreign operations arm of the Guards.

Israel's army said it had shot down 99% of the drones and missiles with the help of the United States and other allies, with the attack resulting in only minor damage.

Tehran said it had "significantly destroyed" its targets.

"We were extremely happy with this action of the IRGC and in fact, we felt better after a long time," said 65-year-old retiree Ali Erfanian.

"This was a help and solidarity with the oppressed people of Gaza and the West Bank."

The latest developments took place against the backdrop of the Gaza war, which began with Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel which killed 1,170 people, mostly civilians, according to Israeli figures.

Tehran backs Hamas but has denied any direct involvement in its attack on Israel.

Israel's retaliatory offensive against the Palestinian militant group has killed at least 33,729 people in the Gaza Strip, mostly women and children, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry. AFP

Format C-1

Declaration about criminal cases

(As per the judgment dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr)

Name and address of candidate : **P. C. MOHAN**
#1928,30th Cross, Banashankari 2nd
Stage,Bangalore,560070
Name of political party : **BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY**
Name of Election : **Election to Loka Sabha**
* Name of the Constituency No.: -25- Bangalore Central Parliamentary Constituency.

IP. C. MOHAN (name of candidate), a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public in formation the following details about my criminal antecedents:

(A) Pending criminal cases

Sl. No.	Name of Court	Case No. and dated	Status of case(s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned And briefdescription of offence (s)
01	6 th Addl. CMM Court Bengaluru City	Crime No. 50/2024 at Halasuru Gate Police Station Dated 19.03.2024	Still in FIR Stage and Same has been Stayed by the Hon'bl High Court of Karnataka in Crl. Pe.No. 2771/ 2024 (482)	143, 149, 188, 283, 290 and 268 of IPC 1860 Alleged unlawful Assembly, Disobedience to order lawfully made by public servant, Causing Obstruction in public way& public nuisance, carrying out protest in a place as per the licensing and Regulation of protesters, Demonstrations and protest marches (Bangalore City) Order, 2021under Section 31(1)(o) of the Karnataka police Act-1963
02	City Civil & Sessions judge, CCH-82 Bengaluru (Special Court) Presently case transferred to XLII Addl.CMM Bengaluru.	PCR No. 46/2019 (No FIR has been filed) Re-numbered as PCR No. 19837/ 2021 12.02.2019	Stayed By the Hon'ble Supreme Court, vide order dated 01/03/ 2021 in SLP (CRL) No. 1475/ 2021 Await Next hearing Date 13.06.2024	171G, 177,181, 191, 193, 199 and 200 of IPC The Complainant Mr.Ananda T.R, claiming to be a social activist and espousing the cause of Sringeri ShivagangaSharadaPeetamMutthas filed PCR No.46/2019 on 12/02/2019 before the City Civil & Sessions judge, CCH-82 Bengaluru (Special Court) Alleging that in the Form-26/Affidavit Submitted before the Returning officer while contesting for elections held in 2014and 2019, there is no disclosure and alleged suppression about certain immovableproperties owned in Lakshmipura Village, kasaba Hobli,Devanahalli Taluk, Hence liable to beprosecuted for giving false statement on oath or affirmation to public servant.

(B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences

Sl. No.	Name of Court & date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed	Maximum Punishment Imposed
-	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

FEDBANK FINANCIAL SERVICES LTD. AUCTION NOTICE

This is to inform the public at large, that FEDBANK FINANCIAL SERVICES LTD., has decided to conduct Auction of Gold ornaments belonging to accounts (mentioned below) which have become overdue or which have defaults or margin breach of customers. The Auction will be held at respective Branches specified below on **Friday 26-04-2024 between 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.** This would continue till the auction process is over.

Anekal 080-27830505,8884114481 FEDGL00880005615, 0004346, 0004347, 0004380, 0004388, 0004395, 0004421, 0005356 Arakalugod 7026026007 FEDGL00360011217, 0011220, 0011222, 0011223, 0011225, 0011227, 0011231, 0011232, 0011236, 0011239, 0011242, 0011246, 0011252, 0011256, 0011260, 0011261, 0011263, 0011298, 0011302, 0011307, 0011313, 0011315, 0011329, 0011335, 0011353, 0011357, 0011363 Arasikere 8971900968 FEDGL0140002888, 0002902, 0002928, 0002935, 0003401, 0003928 B H Road 8162277793,8904344610 FEDGL01030015487, 0015507, 0015611, 0015626, 0015628, 0015632, 0015638, 0015640, 0015650, 0015656, 0015676, 0015680, 0015683, 0015686, 0015689, 0015691, 0015694, 0015697, 0015699, 0015700, 0015701, 0015702, 0015703, 0015704, 0015705, 0015706, 0015707, 0015708, 0015709, 0015710, 0015711, 0015712, 0015713, 0015714, 0015715, 0015716, 0015717, 0015718, 0015719, 0015720, 0015721, 0015722, 0015723, 0015724, 0015725, 0015726, 0015727, 0015728, 0015729, 0015730, 0015731, 0015732, 0015733, 0015734, 0015735, 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From 25k to 75k: Tracking India's equity market in last 10 yrs

The BSE Sensex has roughly added 50,000 points in just one decade and the broader NSE Nifty50 has sprinted from 7,400 to 22,500 level

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

INDIA'S equity market has seen a remarkable rally in the last 10 years as investors continue to show great confidence in Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led central government. Winning the last two General Elections with an absolute majority, the street believes there have been several positives for the market: stable policy, increased capital expenditure and robust inflow of funds.

On the back of this jubilant mood, two frontline indexes rallied and how. The BSE Sensex has roughly added 50,000 points in the last 10 years as it sprinted from 25,000 in May 2014 to 75,000 in April 2024 while the broader NSE Nifty50 has sprinted from 7,400 level to 22,500 level. The market capitalisation of all BSE-listed firms also surged from ₹100 lakh crore to ₹400 lakh crore.

"Low-interest rates implemented by central banks in response to the 2008 financial crisis created an environment that

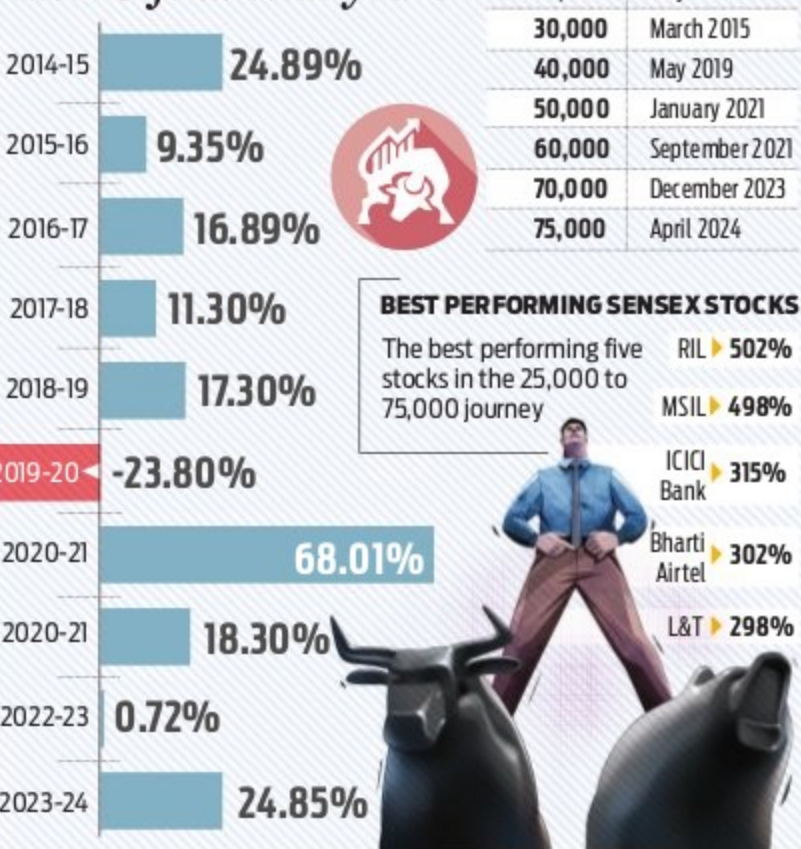
encouraged borrowing and investment, fueling corporate activity and stock market valuations. Additionally, government stimulus packages enacted during economic downturns and periods of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, provided crucial liquidity injections that propped up markets and investor confidence," said Sonam Srivastava, Founder and Fund Manager at Wright Research.

The first year of PM Modi i.e. 2014 was a blockbuster one for the market as Sensex and Nifty advanced more than 30% each. However, in the years to come, the return stagnated and there were some years of good growth and some years of tepid or negative returns.

The markets took a big beating in CY 2015 when Nifty50 fell 4% and in 2016, the demonetisation year, the benchmarks gave a meagre return of 3%.

"Between 2015 and 2018, the markets experienced ups and downs. While there were periods of growth, factors like demonetisation in 2016 and the

Sensex Return in the last 10 financial years



implementation challenges of GST caused temporary setbacks and volatility," said Anirudh Garg, Partner and Fund Manager at Invasset. Garg added that the corporate tax cuts announced in September 2019 gave a significant boost to market sentiment.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 led to massive initial drops and in late March the markets crashed worldwide, reminiscent of the 2008 global financial crisis. This correction, however, was short-lived as liquidity infusion by central banks, a surge in retail investing, and optimism about vaccine rollouts started a bull run which is showing no signs of slowing down. "The market has been supported by continued policy reforms, global liquidity, and strong earnings growth in specific sectors like IT and healthcare. Furthermore, the gradual normalisation of business activities post-pandemic lockdowns and the resilience of the Indian economy have contrib-

uted to the bullish sentiment," said Garg. The strong trust shown by India Inc in PM Modi's policy has been another characteristic of the market rally even as growth in corporate earnings faces difficulty in justifying current equity valuations. "Corporate India's bullish stance towards the Modi government can be attributed to several policy initiatives and reforms undertaken in his tenure. The government's focus on infrastructure development, including investments in roads, railways, and digital connectivity, is perceived as positive for long-term economic growth and corporate profitability. Measures aimed at improving the ease of doing business by streamlining regulations and reducing bureaucratic hurdles are also welcomed by the corporate sector," said Srivastava.

He adds that while corporate earnings have undeniably improved over the past decade, the current market valuations might not fully reflect underlying fundamentals. Some ana-

lysts argue that a potential correction could occur in the future if earnings growth fails to keep pace with market expectations or if risk factors resurface. Garg notes that substantial tax cuts in 2019, reducing corporate tax rates for existing companies to 22% and for new manufacturing entities to 15%, have buoyed earnings optimism. However, whether corporate earnings growth justifies the high stock market valuations observed over Modi's tenure is more complex. "While sectors like IT, pharmaceuticals, and consumer goods have shown strong earnings, contributing positively to stock valuations, other sectors have seen more variability. Moreover, factors such as global liquidity and low-interest rates have elevated price-to-earnings ratios, suggesting that high market valuations may not be fully justified by earnings growth alone but are also influenced by investor sentiment and future growth expectations," said Garg.

MONEY MATTERS

WHY FINANCIAL LITERACY IS FALLING SHORT



FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

RAJAS KELKAR

(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

HERE is no shortage of experts in the world of financial literacy. They furiously make online videos, organise social media events and live investment workshops, and publish content. Despite all that effort, the number of people putting their life savings into financial assets is too small compared to the money that finds its way into property and gold. Considering India's population, less than 4% choose mutual funds or equity-linked assets. Among major global economies, India has the lowest household exposure to equities at 4.7%. The number is three times more for Europe and four times for the US.

Analysts turn the low penetration of financial assets in Indian households as an opportunity. They believe the 'financialisation of savings' could lead to a steady money flow into equity markets. While the English-speaking, primarily urban population has a relatively high tendency to save and invest across financial assets, a vast population has yet to transition from tangible assets.

Financial literacy is not merely answering a few questions

about interest rates, rates of return, or inflation. It needs much more work. In a research paper published in November 2023 on Financial literacy across different states of India, authors Priyadarshi Dash and Rahul Ranjan argue that financial literacy can be estimated based on financial knowledge, financial behaviour, and financial attitude. They use ownership of financial assets to bracket the level of financial literacy.

So, if you only own bank deposit accounts, you have an elementary range of financial literacy. Add credit or debit cards and move up the ladder to a moderate level. The study said that you are considered at an advanced level of financial literacy if you have deposit accounts, credit or debit cards, and e-wallets. Most individuals possess an elementary level of financial literacy at 42.8%, while 20.8% are moderately literate. A third of the people are financially illiterate in India, and only 4.2% have advanced financial literacy.

Financial education needs a massive overhaul. There is a need for an integrated approach towards financial literacy from stakeholders. Presently, the government, Reserve Bank of India, Securities and Exchange Board of India, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority, and industry bodies all conduct their financial literacy pro-

grammes. They target their product categories and propagate information. Public events are held to raise financial awareness across the country every day. However, there is very little measurability for the success of financial literacy initiatives.

You are not financially literate if you take a one-off online test. A survey in America showed that 57% of Americans are financially illiterate. That is in a country where an equity cult exists. If financial literacy material in its current form is not effecting any spectacular change, it is time to revisit the concept.

Financial literacy is an everyday skill. Besides

knowledge, you must have the risk appetite to execute a financial decision. More importantly, you must make an informed decision. The present form of content primarily targets an English-speaking, affluent, urban audience. There is a regional translation that goes with every package of financial literacy content. However, considering the research of Dash and Ranjan, it is clear that it will take long for non-metro and other centres to catch up.

The government needs to think hard about an integrated approach towards financial literacy. The buck stops at the central government in New Delhi. Financial literacy needs to be saved from the fragmented approach taken.

In your financial life, you will use a bank account, buy insurance, and use stockbroking services to manage your money. The integrated approach needs to focus on the user needs for financial literacy and related outcomes and not on industry and products. For that, a standing committee of experts that reports to the finance minister can put together broad guidelines.

Incentives can be given to mutual funds or insurers to create a holistic content strategy for a financial literacy programme. The fragmented approach has created quacks on digital and social media. While some help you move forward, there is very little outcome-based dissemination of information.

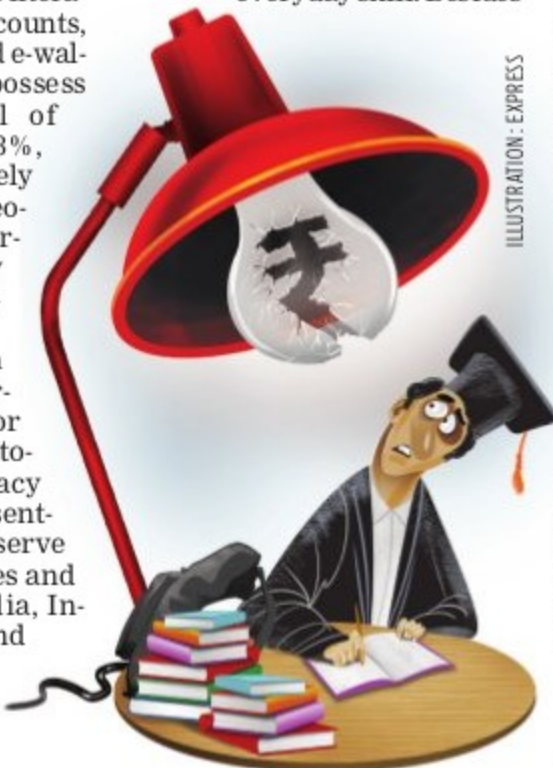


ILLUSTRATION: EXPRES

MONEY-WISE

GREED AND NAIVETY AS A MARKET COMBO



FINANCIAL ADVICE

ASHOK KUMAR

Head of LKW-India.

He can be reached at cedotus@hotmail.com

(Views expressed here are personal)

WHO doesn't want to amass a lot of wealth overnight? But as I'd always tell my B-School students, wealth creation is a process and not akin to striking the lottery jackpot overnight, the possibility of which too is one in a million to put it figuratively.

I recently read of a husband-wife market operator duo duping their subscribers via a chat room to learn the technique of getting 1000 percent returns. I honestly didn't feel even an iota of sympathy for these gullible subscribers. If they were greedy and naïve enough at the same time to believe that such returns are possible or that there is some technique to do it repeatedly, good old Warren Buffet, the revered Oracle of Omaha might have been unheard of.

Friends, professional ac-

quaintances and even patrons at times forward opinions of self-appointed market experts on mobile phone groups and at times even reports from 'reputed' brokerage houses suggesting the possibility of raking in abnormal returns. This, to my mind, is the most basic of mistakes investors make, led on by those preying on their naivety and greed.

A directive in the past by the regulator was to ask certain entities registered with it to affix its logo, address and even a line on investments being subject to market risk in all its market communications. Well, I may have been cynical but I felt even then that unless the intent was something else altogether the majority of the predators/mentioned above would be unregistered fly-by-night operators who shed old and assume new identities rapidly.

On our part, we repeatedly remind anyone who bothers to ask, that if only the art of investing was so easy that one could act on such pearls of wisdom (of which there is no dearth, courtesy of the hyper-active social media) and profit, then everyone ought to be doubling their wealth monthly. Alas, that must remain a pipe dream. Hence, all we can do is once again remind investors of the Latin phrase, Caveat Emptor - Let the Buyer Beware.

Hence, further regulating the already regulated and also largely compliant, while these operators continue to remain unregulated and unfettered simple because they prey on the greed of investors, is akin to missing the woods for the trees.

Without getting into the relative impossibility of monitoring the proliferation of blatantly loaded messages by such fly-by-night operators, it would suffice to say that this is a menace that shows no sign of abating. Such predators invariably seem several steps ahead.

In the mean-while, in the real world, millions of already KYC compliant Indian investors, both residents as well as NRIs and OCIs, have been instructed to embark on yet another KYC 'pilgrimage'. More on that, later. Amen!!!



Real estate sector seen growing three times to \$1.5 trillion by 2034

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ Mumbai

THE real estate sector is seen reaching \$1.5 trillion by 2034, more than trebling from \$482 billion, constituting 10.5% of the total economic output, up from 7.3% last year, over the next decade, says an industry report.

Of the \$1.5 trillion valuation, the residential market is expected to lead with a value of \$906 billion, followed by the office sector contributing \$125 billion, according to a weekend note by realty consultancy Knight Frank and industry lobby CII. Land for manufacturing activities is estimated to be \$28 billion, while warehousing is projected to yield revenues of \$8.9 billion, the report adds.

The report sees cities requiring 78 million new homes by 2034, and this could push the market to a value of \$906 billion worth of new homes be-

cause as much as 42.5% of the 1.55 billion population will be living in cities by 2034.

Under favourable conditions for these drivers and assuming an annual 2% depreciation of the rupee against the dollar, the national GDP could be \$10.3 trillion by 2034. The proportion of high networth individual and ultra high networth individual households is expected to rise from 3% now to 9% by 2034, which will drive demand for luxury housing. In 2008, the top eight cities accounted for 278 million sq ft office stock which has now increased to 900 million sq ft and this is seen jumping 2.7 billion sq ft by 2034, which means an additional requirement of 1.7 billion sq ft in a decade. As the sector scales up, the potential revenue generation from office real estate is seen \$125 billion. The report expects GCCs driving office market in the next decade.



LIC investments in Adani stocks jump 59%

PTI @ New Delhi

LIC, the state-owned insurance behemoth, has seen a 59% rise in value of its investments in Adani group companies in 2023-24 fiscal year after the conglomerate made a smart recovery since being hammered by a damning short seller report.

The value of LIC's investment in seven Adani group companies has soared from ₹38,471 crore as on March 31, 2023 to ₹61,210 crore on March 31, 2024, registering an increase of ₹22,738 crore, according to stock exchange data.

Last year, the insurance giant faced intense scrutiny over its decision to invest in the Adani group amidst a political slugfest after allegations of stock manipulation fuelled by Hindenburg report. Adani group denied any wrong doing. Adani Group's stocks, which at lowest point took a beating of about \$150 billion, have staged a remarkable comeback, fuelled by robust profit growth across its diverse businesses.

Setting fresh highs: No end seen for gold rally

BENN KOCHUVEEDAN @ Mumbai

A number of analysts on the Wall Street foresee the historic rally in gold prices to break more records—having already scaled to \$2,420/ounce last Friday following reports of an imminent Iranian attack on Israel—with one of them pegging the rally touching the \$2,700-mark by December as investors continue to rush to the best safe-haven asset as seek refuge.

They see the only respite if at all, will come if the greenback gains, as gold prices are inversely linked to the strength of the US currency along with major central banks pushing back from snapping up more gold as reserves. Another reason for the safe-haven rally is the slew of elections this year, including India, the US and England.

After losing ground following the stock market rally after the pandemic deep-cuts, gold lost ground in 2021 and 2022 but the Russian invasion of Ukraine in late February 2022 changed the course of the yellow metal and since then it has not looked back. After dipping



to a low of \$1,984/oz in mid-February, gold has steadily climbed almost without interruption and has since then gained almost 20%.

The immediate trigger for the past \$2,420/ounce rally has been the hotter US inflation and other datapoints, reinforcing expectations of shallower rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve this year which will begin well after June.

Spot gold on the Chicago exchange eased 1.5% to \$2,336.87/ounce last Friday, taking a breather after hitting a record high of \$2,419.79. Given the rally and the mounting risk of an imminent skirmishes between Tehran and Tel Aviv has Goldman Sachs revising its outlook for the bullion to a historic

\$2,700/ounce by December.

Nicholas Snowdon, Lavinia Forcellese and Lina Thomas of Goldman Sachs attribute the fewer likely Fed rate cuts, stronger economic growth trends and record rally in equities for the gold rally which has already gained 20% since mid-February when it had fallen to under \$1890.

"From the rebased price level, with these positive price factors still set to play out ahead of us, we upgrade our price forecast to \$2,700/ounce by year-end as against \$2,300/ounce previously," they said in a weekend note citing the yellow metal's bull market indifference to the usual macro factors.

James Steel, the chief precious metals analyst at HSBC Securities US, said gold is hitting record highs on geopolitical risks, financial uncertainties, higher stock valuations, and rate cut expectations in 2025 which all may keep the prices strong. Another reason is the record gold buying by central banks and China, the world's largest consumer importing close to 350 tonnes in the first two months of 2024.

"The ongoing gold rally has been fueled by a powerful cocktail of safe-haven and hedge fund purchases, prompted by record-high equities and sticky inflation, triggering heavy momentum buying, though market sentiment is clearly bullish, and while the near-term upward trajectory shows no signs of slacking, we think prices are progressively overstretched," Steel said.

"Accordingly we raise our average price forecasts across the board for 2024 at 2,500/ounce but lower price later in 2025 at around \$1,975/oz," he said, adding the dollar is set for big gains later this year which should contain gold.

According to Steel, gold is an asset without a yield, thus investors tend to find it more attractive in times of low and negative real interest rates. Gold is priced in dollars and thus generally moves inversely to the greenback and historically, the dollar levels have exerted a significant influence on gold. Another major reason, according to Steel, is the surging Chinese imports, which touched 818.3 tonnes in 2023, up 34% from 2022.



Carlos Alcaraz's hopes of a third successive Barcelona Open title have been dashed as he withdrew from the tournament on Sunday due to a right arm injury, organisers announced. It is the same injury that forced Alcaraz to pull out of this week's Monte Carlo Masters and comes just weeks away from the French Open.

Structural pitfalls of Bengaluru

Another new season has not begun well for the franchise based out of Garden City. As RCB linger at the bottom of the table after six games in IPL 2024, **Swaroop Swaminathan** tries to understand why it has happened and what has gone wrong for them year after year...

LOST in the noise of Virat Kohli's century against Rajasthan Royals was a little-known record-extending losing run. That night in Jaipur, the franchise had lost a hat-trick of fixtures within the first five matches of a new campaign nine times (Mumbai Indians are the next worst on six).

You needn't necessarily be out if you suffer three consecutive losses in the opening phase but the best teams tend to start well. Sure, Mumbai recovered in 2015 to win the title after losing the first four and five of the opening six games. But these things don't happen by chance. Despite the relative randomness of the format, title-winning teams have seldom had to play catch-up from the early stages.

Here's a number that encapsulates Bengaluru's issues. Over the last six full seasons going back to 2018, they had, on average, lost 6.83 games in the group phase per season. In that same six-year period, the champions, on average, averaged two fewer losses in the group phase. From 2008 to 2017, the champions, on average, lost 5.3 games. Bengaluru? 7.1. The leadership may have changed. Head coaches and support staff may have changed. The ownership may have changed. Players may have changed. Yet, the more things have changed, the more they have remained the same.

Rahul Dravid last played for the side in September 2010. What's remarkable though is that the former India captain remains the second-leading Indian run-scorer with 1132 (Virat Kohli is the clear leader). KL Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Devdutt Padikkal, Robin Uthappa, Sourabh Tiwary, Manish Pandey... they have all played for the franchise during or after Dravid but were either let go or they couldn't show their true abilities. But it's not like they didn't push the boat out for Indian middle-order players. At some level, the story of Tiwary has played itself out multiple times. The hard-hitting southpaw was a big-money signing from Mumbai before the 2011 season following a decent year for the runners-up (419 runs at 135.99). His numbers nosedived



POINTS TO PONDER

There may be eight games to go but Bengaluru already have a mountain to climb. They desperately need a win to resurrect their campaign. A good show versus Hyderabad, their opponents today, will be a good start. A look...

PACER SIRAJ NEEDS TO STEP UP

The franchise has a lot of issues but the below average returns of two of their premier pacer has not helped them. Mohammed Siraj (four wickets at an average of 57.25) have found the going tough. They need big performances from him but time is running out.



REECE TOPLEY VS ABHISHEK AND HEAD

Hyderabad's high-intent batting has seen them get off the blocks quickly in multiple games. So Reece Topley's — who has established himself as the primary overseas bowler in this side — left-arm angle against Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head has the potential to decide the early parts of the contest.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru vs Sunrisers Hyderabad, Bengaluru

4 RCB are on a four-match losing run

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS AND JIOCINEMA, 7.30 PM

the year he left for Garden City. "It's an interesting question," was how Reece Topley diplomatically put it when he was told that the second-best Indian batter ever (in terms of run-scoring) was Dravid. "That probably spans different eras. From my experience, I can answer that. I have not been around 16 years, that's probably something that's transcended many managements. Virat (Kohli) has been consistent for RCB for many years which is amazing and the loyalty that he has shown to the franchise and also the franchise to him is incredible. But, I mean, that's a question on history..."

History is a good starting point. While you want to be careful about statistics as they can

sometimes be deceiving, you can't argue against cold, hard numbers. The second leading Indian spin wicket-taker continues to be Anil Kumble with 53 and he last played for them in 2010. In 2024, their leading wicket-taker among Indian spinners is Mayank Dagar with one.

In sport, there's a widely popular term known as marginal gains. The theory posits that small increments in all departments make a team better than the sum of their parts over time. This franchise may be close to the other end of the spectrum. Marginal losses. A small illustration to drive this point. It's not

surprise that a team that had AB de Villiers, Chris Gayle and Virat Kohli owns the record for being the most aggressive IPL side at home. In terms of runs per over, nobody even comes close to their average of 8.84 per over in the league's history (among the OG 8). In simple terms, that's an average of 177 every match. But they have never capitalised on this advantage because their bowling attack has lacked the nous of bowling in that postage stamp-sized ground.

Sankar Rajgopal, who used to work as an R&D Consultant and Analyst at Punjab Kings, explains. "RCB clearly is a successful franchise," he tells this daily. "How we define success may be different from how they define their success, I don't know. They are popular from a social media point of view, they are making good profits and they are doing everything that a franchise is supposed to do as a business owner. But, from a team point of view, what would you need? You need a team that is fit enough to play well at home. Can a team win five out of seven games at home? For that to happen in a small ground on good batting tracks, there are certain things you need to know. RCB has always had Gayle, Kohli, AB de types of players. Now it's Faf (Du Plessis) and (Glenn) Maxwell. They have copy pasted that same formula (but) it needs to change. The experience may need to come in the finishing department and, you know, maybe younger good Indian players can take the powerplay. I'm just looking at the template that's been followed, it's been the same throughout where the bowling has sort of suffered. It's been the same this year as well," Rajgopal, Viacom18's Creative Director these days, adds.

While RCB remains extremely well supported, a few have resigned themselves to inevitable fear even before the start of seasons. "Still tune in like clockwork every time there is an RCB game despite moving to another timezone," Anand Sridhar, a one-time match-going fan, says. Will Monday night bring some salvation? Or will it bring further damnation?

(This piece will be updated as and when the owners of the franchise respond to some of the questions raised. At the time of going to press, responses were still awaited).

GOMESH S @ Chennai

IN many ways, the stage was perfectly set.

With four balls left in the innings, a struggling Daryl Mitchell took the long walk back up the stairs to the Wankhede dressing room. But not one fan from the stands was bothered. The moment they were waiting for was there. MS Dhoni walked out to bat in Chennai Super Kings colours, probably for one last time at the ground where he won the World Cup for India 13 years ago, with the crowd bringing down the roof. The noise from the stands probably was heard at the MI team hotel — Trident, just down the road from the stadium.

At that point, CSK were 186/4. Mumbai Indians' Hardik Pandya, till then, had gotten away with ordinary bowling against Mitchell who was hit his way into form. But this is Dhoni. Even at 42, there are not many who could pounce on anything that is in the slot like he does. And Hardik bowled exactly where Dhoni wanted — a length delivery that was sent into the stands. The noise and chants only grew louder as Dhoni

RUN FEST

Rohit's ton in vain for MI as MS blitz powers Kings



CSK's MS Dhoni hit three consecutive sixes in the 20th over against MI | SPORTSPICS

went on to hit two more sixes, taking CSK to 206/4 in 20 overs. Dhoni's finishing touch, in the end, proved to be the difference-maker as Mumbai lost by 20 runs. Rohit Sharma put the hosts in the game until the death with a brilliant century but he couldn't find sustained support from the other end.

Earlier, ff Dhoni's unbeaten 20 off four balls gave the finishing touch, it was Ruturaj Gaikwad and Shivam Dube who set the stage for Chennai. Kept as the No. 3 for the match — a tactical call perhaps — Gaikwad started off in his usual fashion, picking up three boundaries in a Gerald Coetzee over.

While he slowed down a little post-powerplay, once joined by Dube, Gaikwad kept the momentum going. Together, they ensured at least one boundary per over, while going after the weak links — Hardik, Akash Madwal and Romario Shepherd. Gaikwad got out for 69 from 40 balls, but Dube kept it going. He played Jasprit Bumrah with caution while taking on others on his way to an unbeaten 66 from 38 balls.

Once Mitchell, too, fell for 17 runs from 14 balls, Dhoni did the rest.

Brief scores: Chennai Super Kings 206/4 in 20 ovs (Ravindra 21, Gaikwad 69, Dube 66 no, Dhoni 20 no.) **MI** Mumbai Indians 186/6 in 20 ovs (Rohit 105 no, Tilak 31).

Sweet outcome for KKR in Salt-flavoured show

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

A MASSIVE partnership of 120 between Phil Salt and Shreyas Iyer took Kolkata Knight Riders past Lucknow Super Giants at the Eden Gardens on Sunday. Mitchell Starc's three wickets in the first innings helped the hosts keep Lucknow under par with 161 for seven in the first innings.

In the chase, Kolkata got off to a rapid start as Shamar Joseph gave away 20 runs in the first over. That set the tone even when Mohsin Khan sent Sunil Narine and Angkrish Raghuvanshi back inside the powerplay. Salt was at his fiery best as

he did not put a foot wrong. Lucknow introduced spin early on by introducing Krunal Pandya, but the Englishman hit three consecutive boundaries.

Ravi Bishnoi tried his best to control the flow of runs but the

Kolkata pair found a way to score off other bowlers. Arshad Khan conceded 24 runs in his two overs, while Joseph accounted for 47 runs in his four overs. Salt completed his second half-century of the season off 26 balls. Iyer, at

times, was reduced to being a spectator at the other end, but his calm knock helped Kolkata bag the match by eight wickets.

Brief scores

LSG: 161/7 in 20 overs (Nicholas Pooran 45; Mitchell Starc 3/28) **lost**
KKR: 161/2 in 15.4 overs (Phil Salt 89 no, Shreyas Iyer 38; Mohsin Khan 2/29).



Phil Salt hit 89 off 47 deliveries on Sunday | PTI

Gukesh beats Vidit to regain top spot

AGENCIES @ Toronto

INDIA'S D Gukesh bounced back with a finely-crafted game to outwit compatriot Vidit Gujrathi and regain his joint lead with Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia after the eighth round of the Candidates chess tournament here. On a day when R Praggnanandhaa played out a draw with Firozua Alireza of France, Hikaru Nakamura sealed his supremacy in the all-American duel against Fabiano Caruana to come back in to reckoning for top honours.

Overnight sole leader Nepomniachtchi faltered in the early stages to allow tailender Nijat Abasov to get away with an easy draw in the other game of the eight-player double round-robin event.

With six rounds still to come, Gukesh and Nepomniachtchi have 5 points apiece and they



D Gukesh (in pic) & Ian Nepomniachtchi are in joint lead with 5 points apiece

are followed by Nakamura and Praggnanandhaa on 4.5 points each. Caruana is now sole fifth on four points. Gujrathi on 3.5 comes in next ahead of Alireza on three points, while Abasov is still at the rear of the tables on 2.5 points. Gukesh had his task cut out and went for a rare variation wherein he surprised Gujrathi as early as on move four. Gujrathi sank into a long

Results round 8 (Indians unless specified): R Praggnanandhaa (4.5) drew with Firozua Alireza (Fra, 3); Vidit Gujrathi (3.5) lost to D Gukesh (5); Hikaru Nakamura (Usa, 4.5) beat Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 4); Ian Nepomniachtchi (Fid, 5) drew with Nijat Abasov (Aze, 2.5). **Women:** Zhongyi Tan (5) lost to Tingjeli Lei (Chn, 5); Koneru Humpy (3.5) beat R Vaishali (2.5); Nurgul Salimova (Bul, 3.5) drew with Anna Muzychuk (Ukr, 3); Lagno Kateryna (Fid, 4.5) drew with Aleksandra Goryachkina (Fid, 5).

thought and ended up losing around twenty minutes on the clock. In the next few moves Gukesh equalized without much ado even as Gujrathi tried to make some headways on both flanks.

In the middle game, Gukesh seized control of the only open file and used his queen and rook for an absolute domination to penetrate.

SHOOTING

Palak helps India claim 20th Olympic quota

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

INDIAN shooters continue to climb higher and higher in recent times. Pistol shooter Palak became the latest to be in the spotlight as she clinched a record-extending 20th Paris Olympic quota for the country with a bronze-medal return in the ongoing ISSF Final Olympic Qualification Championship Rifle/Pistol event in Rio De Janeiro.

With this development, India have now won every possi-

ble quota (two in each discipline) in all rifle and pistol events. Shotgun shooters, meanwhile, have accounted for four quotas so far.

Competing in the women's 10m air pistol final, Palak, the reigning Asian Games winner, overcame a tricky start and maintained her composure during the business end to finish with a bronze medal around the neck, and thereby assuring India of a quota. Armenia's Elmira Karapetyan won gold, while Thai



teenager Kamonlak Saenchana won silver and the second available quota place. Two quotas were on offer during the event.

Since Karapetyan had already secured a quota during the 2022 World Championships, she was not eligible. Esha Singh is the other quota winner in this particular discipline for India. The teenager from Haryana had earned a spot in the final after finishing sixth during the qualification stage with a tally of 578. Sainyam,

the other Indian in the finals, finished fifth. Both Indians had a start to forget, but came back admirably under pressure as Saenchana and the experienced Veronika Major of Hungary threatened to pull away from the field in the early stages with some sublime shooting. Saenchana's 10.9 (a perfect hit) in her 13th shot was a case in point. Eliminations proved a disaster for Veronika as the Indian duo rallied. Ahead of the 19th shot, Palak took a 0.6 lead over Veronika with Sainyam exiting in fifth.

EPL: Liverpool and Arsenal stunned

AGENCIES @ London

LIVERPOOL'S Premier League title challenge suffered a potentially fatal blow as Crystal Palace won 1-0 at Anfield on Sunday. A first home league defeat in 29 games for the Reds leaves Jurgen Klopp's men two points behind Manchester City and level with Arsenal, who also suffered a shock 0-2 defeat against Aston Villa later at the Emirates.

Eberechi Eze's early goal handed the Eagles a vital win in their battle for survival as they move eight points clear of the drop zone.



Liverpool's Andrew Robertson reacts after the match on Sunday | AFP

Madrid see off Mallorca

MADRID: Aurelien Tchouameni's long-range strike earned Real Madrid a 1-0 victory over

Mallorca on Saturday that kept them eight points clear of Barcelona at the top of La Liga ahead of the upcoming Clasico. Barcelona, who are desperately trying to force their way back into the title race, matched Madrid's result with a 1-0 win of their own at Cadiz.

Leverkusen win historic title

LEVERKUSEN: Bayer Leverkusen lifted the Bundesliga title for the first time in their 120-year history on Sunday, a 5-0 victory over Werder Bremen breaking Bayern Munich's 11-year stranglehold on the German top flight.



SMOOTH SAILING: HOW TO STEER YOUR CAREER TO THE NAVY

Demanding an unwavering commitment, life at the Indian Navy can be rigorous yet fulfilling, but how can one bag this dream role? Lovely Majumdar spoke to an ex-Navy personnel and collated details for the youth aspiring to dedicate themselves to this esteemed calling



Commander (Dr)
Anil Rana

Life at shore & beyond

COMMANDER (Dr) Anil Rana is currently serving as the Director of the Manipal Institute of Technology (MIT) and has held this position since the year 2021.

Before transitioning to academia, he held the rank of Commander within the engineering branch of the Indian Navy, undertaking various responsibilities. His academic credentials include a PhD in Reliability Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay and an MTech from IIT Delhi.

EdexLive interviewed Dr Rana regarding his extensive 27-year maritime career and where aspiring Navy cadets or officers can find inspiration in navigating their life paths.

What inspired you to join the Indian Navy?

The inspiration behind my decision to join the Navy is deeply rooted in my family's tradition of serving in the defence forces, which has instilled in me a profound sense of duty and patriotism. However, what truly solidified my resolve was my father's ultimate sacrifice during the 1971 war when he bravely went down with the Indian Naval Ship (INS) Khukri. His unwavering courage in the face of adversity serves as a constant reminder of the noble cause he fought for.

Beyond familial influence, the Navy offers unparalleled opportunities for leadership development and the cultivation of invaluable skills. It presents a platform where one can confront challenges head-on, pushing the boundaries of their capabilities and unlocking their full potential.

When did you join the Navy? What were the initial years like?

I joined the Navy at the young age of 16, in 1982 as an ERA (Engine Room Artificer) Apprentice. The initial years of my naval journey were characterised by sheer hard work, tenacity, and an unwavering commitment to succeed. The first time I sailed was in an old Petya class destroyer Indian Navy Ship (INS) Kad-matt in which I also participated in the IPKF (Indian Peace Keeping Force) operations in Sri Lanka. Later, I sailed in INS Veer and was also a part of the commissioning crew of INS Khukri (the new corvette class ship).

Later on, in 1989, I qualified for a CW (Commission Worthy) scheme and was deputed to the Indian Naval Academy for officers training. Looking back, the initial years of my naval career were both challenging and rewarding. They laid the foundation for the journey ahead, imbuing me with the skills, resilience, and mindset necessary to thrive in the dynamic environment of the Indian Navy.

What were the roles you essayed as a naval officer?

As a marine mechanical engineer within the Navy, my primary focus was on the maintenance and upkeep of naval warships. This entailed overseeing the operation and maintenance of intricate mechanical and electrical systems onboard, including power generation, distribution, refrigeration, ventilation, and pumping systems. Rigorous equipment inspections and maintenance protocols were integral to ensuring the seamless functioning of critical shipboard systems.

Furthermore, as part of my train-

ing and development as an officer, I received comprehensive instruction in human resource management, type training or warship systems and leadership skills as well.

I also had the privilege of serving in the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai and later on, in the Fleet Maintenance Unit (Mumbai), wherein, I was leading a large number of men responsible for carrying out repair and maintenance of a wide variety of Naval warships and submarines. I was also a part of the prestigious first nuclear submarine project of the country.

What were some of the vital skills that you acquired while serving in the Navy?

Serving in the Navy offers individuals a platform to acquire a diverse range of valuable skills. Here are some of the key skills that can be developed through naval service:

Resilience and interpersonal skills: Enduring the challenges of sea life cultivates resilience and fortitude. Interacting and leading teams in demanding conditions hones interpersonal skills.

Self-discipline: The Navy instills a culture of strict adherence to rules and protocols, fostering a strong sense of self-discipline.

Leadership: Opportunities to lead and manage teams or projects are abundant in the Navy.

Adaptability: The dynamic and ever-changing environment of naval operations nurtures adaptability, enabling individuals to thrive in diverse situations and environments.

Teamwork: Collaboration and cooperation with colleagues are essential in naval operations, fostering strong teamwork skills among personnel.

On the career front, serving in the Navy equips individuals with:

Technical skills: Depending on their roles, individuals can gain expertise in various technical domains such as navigation, or communications. For instance, my specialisation was in mechanical engineering, wherein, I pursued advanced studies and training from prestigious institutions like Naval College Lonavala, IIT Delhi, and IIT Bombay, along with numerous specialised courses in India and abroad.

Project management: Naval service often involves managing and coordinating complex projects, providing valuable experience in project management.

International experience: With its global presence, the Navy offers exposure to working with diverse cultures, enhancing individuals' international experience and cross-cultural competency.

What were your most challenging moments?

Among the most demanding moments I encountered during my naval career were during operations such as the IPKF missions and rescue operations amidst Category 5 cyclones in treacherous seas.

The second most demanding moment was a tenure I spent in the installation and repair of the engineering systems of the first nuclear submarine. Since there was no set legacy or format for us to follow, we had to learn everything from scratch.

Students are mostly apprehensive due to the rigorous selection procedure and the life after that. What are the perks of this profession?

Embarking on a career in the Indian Navy offers a multitude of perks and advantages.

Firstly, the Navy provides a well-balanced lifestyle, offering diverse experiences, fulfilling careers, and opportunities for travel.

Individuals in the Navy receive a competitive salary, along with medical benefits, generous superannuation, lifelong pension and various special allowances, particularly when posted to a vessel. Medical and canteen facilities including recreation facilities can be availed lifelong, even after retirement.

Beyond monetary rewards, a Navy career offers far-reaching benefits. It provides opportunities for personal and professional growth, comprehensive training tailored to one's role, and avenues to acquire professional, trade, and tertiary qualifications.

How is serving as an engineer in the Navy different from serving elsewhere, say at a corporation?

Engineers in the Navy, whether military members or civilian engineers, are entrusted with maintaining and operating a wide array of sophisticated technology across ships, submarines, aircraft, weapon systems, and communications infrastructure.

Unlike corporate engineers who may specialise in specific areas, Navy engineers often find themselves undertaking diverse roles and assignments dictated by the Navy's operational needs. For instance, they may be deployed at short notice to manage ship repairs in the aftermath of a cyclone or other natural disasters.

Moreover, naval engineers are exposed to a wide range of engineering tasks, making them versatile professionals capable of adapting to different challenges. In contrast, corporate engineers typically focus on specific job roles within their organisation, limiting the breadth of their engineering experience.

The transition from Navy to academia, how did it happen?

The transition from the Navy to academia was a natural progression for me, driven by a passion for understanding the intricate science and technology behind naval systems. My transition to academia was facilitated by the knowledge and expertise gained during my naval service, allowing me to further explore and contribute to the field of engineering and technology.

Any advice for students aspiring to serve the Indian Navy?

For students aspiring to serve in the Indian Navy, I would offer the following advice:

Understand the commitment: Be prepared to devote yourself wholeheartedly to your duties and responsibilities.

Educational pursuits: The Navy values individuals with strong educational backgrounds, so aim to excel in your studies.

Physical fitness: Maintain a healthy lifestyle, engage in regular exercise, and develop endurance, strength, and agility to meet the physical demands of naval training and operations.

Leadership skills: Participate in leadership roles within the school, sports teams, or community organisations to develop your ability to lead and inspire others.

Seek mentorship: Seek guidance and mentorship from current or former naval officers who can provide insights into the challenges and opportunities of naval service.

Remember, serving in the Indian Navy is a noble and rewarding profession that offers opportunities for personal and professional growth, adventure, and the chance to serve your country with honour.

ENTRY SCHEMES

While the Indian Navy offers entry via exams conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), what are the other points of entry into the profession? Here is a list of ways to get into the Navy, divided as per educational qualifications

FOR INTERMEDIATE 10+2

National Defence Academy (NDA)/Naval Academy (NA) (PC)*

Conducted by: UPSC Branch: Executive, Electrical, and Engineering

Notification: Released May/December

Training: 3 years at NDA Khadakwasla and 1 year at other centre(s) Duration: 4 years

10+2 (BTECH) CADET ENTRY SCHEME

Conducted by: Integrated Headquarters Ministry of Defence (Navy) (IHQ MoD (N))

Branch: Executive and Technical (Engineering and Electrical)

Notification: Released January/August

Training: Indian Naval Academy (INA), Ezhimala Duration: 4 years

FOR GRADUATES

Combined Defence Services Examination (CDSE) (PC)

Conducted by: UPSC Branch: Executive, Electrical, and Engineering

Notification: Released May/December

Training: INA, Ezhimala

Duration: 44 weeks

NATIONAL CADET CORPS (NCC) (PC)

For NCC, candidates ought to produce a Naval Wing Senior Division NCC 'C' certificate with BE/BTech degree.

The eligible candidates are required to forward their application directly to IHQ MoD (N)/Directorate of Manpower Planning and Recruitment (DMPR) through Directorate General (DG) NCC.

Conducted by: No written tests
Branch: Executive Notification: Releases January/July
Training: INA, Ezhimala
Duration: 44 weeks

INDIAN NAVAL ENTRANCE TEST (INET) (SSC)

Candidates are required to possess a BE or BTech degree

Conducted by: IHQ MoD (N)/DMPR

Branch: Executive, Electrical, and Engineering

Notification: Released as per requirement

Training: INA, Ezhimala

Duration: 22 weeks

SPECIAL NAVAL ARCHITECTURE (SSC)

Conducted by: IHQ MoD (N)/DMPR

Branch: Executive, Electrical, and Engineering

Notification: Released for May/December

Training: INA, Ezhimala Duration: 4 years

NAVAL ARMAMENT INSPECTION CADRE (NAIC) ENTRY (SSC)

Conducted by: IHQ MoD (Navy)

Notification: February/March or as per requirement

Duration: 22 weeks

Training: INA, Ezhimala



*SSC - Short Service Commission
*PC - Permanent Commission



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DAY'S DIARY

WTO founded

In 1994, representatives from over 120 gathered in Marrakesh, Morocco, to establish the World Trade Organization

EASY TRADE

It created a new global framework for liberalising trade in goods and services, protecting intellectual property rights, and easing trade tensions



NEGOTIATIONS

The bulk of the WTO's current work comes from the 1986-94 and earlier negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)



DIFFERENT ASPECTS

While GATT had dealt with trade in goods, the WTO covers trade in services, and in traded inventions, creations and designs

CE's guide to happenings in the city

PG 2

Today, thousands of runners from world over, including B'luru, will be sweating it out through the rolling terrain of Massachusetts, USA, as they race the prestigious Boston Marathon

A RUNNER'S HOLY GRAIL

One of the oldest and most prestigious long-distance races in the world, the Boston Marathon – held every year on the third Monday of April – has been a long-standing Boston tradition and a highlight in the international running calendar. From a modest beginning, the event has evolved into a global spectacle, attracting over 30,000 participants from the world over. The iconic course guides runners through a mix of hilly countryside and the streets of Boston. The 2024 edition is the 11th event since the marathon was marred by an act of domestic terrorism in 2013, leading to the death of three people and injuring nearly 300.



RUNNER'S HIGH

DESE GOWDA

OVER the last three months, Ranjini Gupta, a fitness coach and mother of two, has put herself through a grueling training schedule focused on speed workouts and marathon-specific long runs. This is for the prestigious Boston Marathon (a 42.19-km race which itself has a stringent qualification process). For Gupta, running began as an escape, a little 'me-time' that blossomed into a defining passion, post the birth of her second child a decade ago. Currently in Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America, Gupta is one among the many amateur runners taking part in the Boston Marathon. "Running chose me," Ranjini says, adding, "The Boston Marathon is referred to as the holy grail of running in our circuit. Being able to qualify has been a dream." Despite this being her third qualification, it will be her first actual race in Boston.

Vikas Chawla, director of Operations at a tech giant in the city, sees the Boston Marathon as the final jewel in his six-star marathon quest, having run marathons across Berlin, New York, London, Chicago, and Tokyo. "I planned to earn the last

star of my six-star journey at Boston," he says, adding, "Among all major metros in India, Bengaluru's weather is a blessing for runners; you can run at any time during the day, apart from the peak summer season of 30-45 days. I have been running in the evenings and nights to balance my work schedule."

This year, Bengaluru has been gripped by an unprecedented heatwave, posing additional challenges for marathon training. "Simulating the weather conditions here is difficult because Bengaluru is extremely hot. It was quite challenging; for my long runs, I had to wake up early to finish before becoming too dehydrated. The course also has rolling terrain, so I tried to simulate that by running the final part on flyovers to see how my legs responded when fatigued," shares Shilpa Thergoankar, a tech professional, who initially took up running to boost her cardiovascular health. "It's my first time here, and I just want to enjoy the course – now that all the hard work for qualifying is done," she says.

For Gautham Bhagawan, COO of a hospital group, the Boston Marathon marks the culmination of his World Marathon Majors tour, a journey that began a decade ago in Chicago. "I'm fortunate to be completing my World Marathon Majors in Boston," he shares, adding, "My main aim is to enjoy and complete the race, earning the six-star world marathon majors medal. My family is here to cheer me on, making it an even more special moment."



GRUB HUB

Aslam Gafoor (@aslamgafoor) is a hospitality professional with experience in business development, sales and marketing with well-known hotels, and food and beverage companies. A few of his passions are travel, food and wine, and he enjoys sharing these experiences as a columnist.

THE QUIZ WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

Send answers to bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com with the subject line 'Food quiz'

The correct answers and names of the first three respondents with right answers will be featured in CE on Monday. The first-prize winner will receive a voucher worth ₹1,000 from Old Bangalore Cafe, Jayanagar**

THE RIGHT ANSWERS

1) Tabbouleh 2) Argentina 3) Ayrar

FIRST 3 TO GET IT RIGHT

1) Smriti Iyer 2) Mahesh R 3) Hitesh G

HOSMAT HOSPITALS - BANGALORE

Orthopaedics, Accidents, Injuries, Spine/Neuro & Plastic Surgery Hospital



HOSMAT Hospitals, established in 1993, is one of the first major private trauma and orthopaedic hospitals in India, and the first in Bengaluru. Dr Thomas Chandy, Orthopaedic Surgeon, started the hospital after years of specialised orthopaedic training, and as a consultant. He was running a successful orthopaedic practice, as Chief of Orthopaedics in Tulsa Oklahoma USA. The original HOSMAT Hospital was founded with high American standards, which the organization strives to maintain to this day. With 3 Orthopaedic hospitals in Bangalore today, HOSMAT is one the largest, and one of the best equipped, group of Orthopaedic hospitals in India, having 550 beds and 28 operation theatres. In 30 years, HOSMAT has treated over 16 lakh-satisfied patients. It is one of the premier Orthopaedic specialties hospitals, with knee/hip/shoulder replacement, Arthroscopy (Key Hole Surgery) - Knee & Shoulder, Ligaments. Spine, Hand, Children Orthopaedics. All orthopaedic specialties and other departments as below

THEWEEK

10-12-2023

National Survey Best Hospitals Specialisation - Orthopaedics

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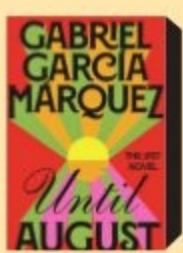


HOSMAT Hospitals - Magrath Road
45, Magrath Rd, Bengaluru,
Karnataka 560025
080-25593796 / +91 91084 50310



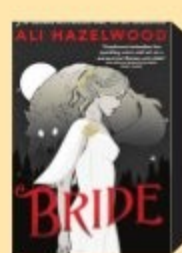
HOSMAT Hospitals - Kalyan Nagar
No. 1, Hennur Cross, Kalyan Nagar,
Bengaluru, Karnataka 560043
080-45332400 / +91 96637 06440

BOOK NOOK



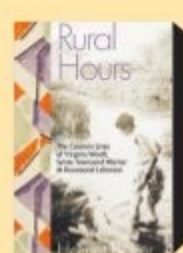
Until August
By Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Sitting alone, overlooking the blue lagoon, Ana Magdalena Bach surveys the men of the hotel bar. She is happily married and has no reason to escape the world she has created. And yet, every August, she travels to the island where her mother is buried, and for one night, takes a new lover.



Bride
By Ali Hazelwood

Misery Lark, the only daughter of the most powerful Vampire councilman of the Southwest, is an outcast. She has been called upon to uphold a historic peacekeeping alliance between the Vampires and their mortal enemies, the Werewolves, and sees little choice but to surrender herself.



Rural Hours
By Harriet Baker

A story of three women, each of whom moved to the countryside and was forever changed by it. Slowly, we start to see transformations unfold: Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Townsend Warner, and Rosamond Lehmann emerge before us as the passionate, visionary writers we know them to be.



Come And Get It
By Kiley Reid

Millie Cousins, a senior resident assistant, wants to graduate, get a job, and buy a house. So when Agatha Paul, a visiting professor and writer, offers Millie an easy yet unusual opportunity, she jumps at the chance.



COLOURFUL SYMPHONY

A visitor admires watercolour paintings at an exhibition titled Hues of Harmony, at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath | **NAGARAJA GADEKAL**

QUICKFIX

POTATO RAITA

INGREDIENTS

- Potato: 2
- Cumin seeds: 1 tsp
- Finely chopped coriander leaves
- Curd: 250 g
- Green chilli: as per taste
- Salt to taste

METHOD

- Boil the potato. Don't overcook it. Remove skin and grate it.
- Roast jeera. Powder it.
- In a bowl, add the curd, grated potato, jeera powder, and salt. Mix well.
- Garnish with coriander leaves.
- Serve with rice or chapati.

Tip: Pepper powder can also be added as per taste.



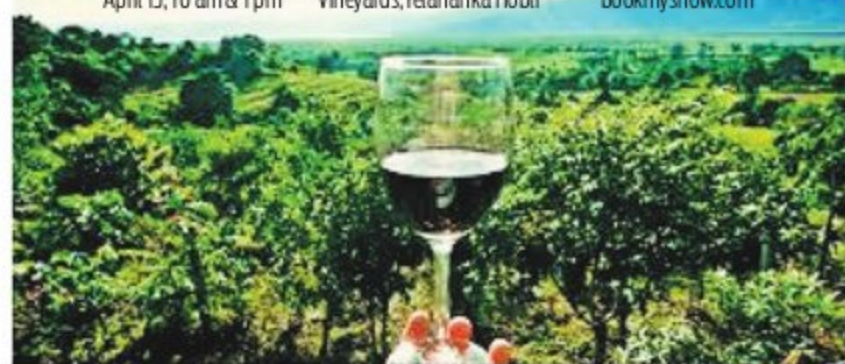
Contributed by **Rama Shecar, Kochi**

WHATWHENWHYWHERE

Wine and Dine

Enjoy your glass of wine with a green view, which will be followed by activities where you know more about the your wine's journey from grape to glass.

WHEN: April 15, 10 am & 1 pm
WHERE: Kinvaah Vineyards, Yelahanka Hobli
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com



Theatre Workshop

This workshop by Savi Sarin gives your child an opportunity to explore the world of theatre, enhance their creativity, and build confidence on stage. Suitable for children between the ages of 7 and 14.

WHEN: April 15, 10 am
WHERE: Tuco Intelligent Experience Centre, Bellandur
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Crochet Workshop

Create beautiful handmade items from yarn under expert guides who will help you learn and master the techniques of crocheting.

WHEN: April 15, 3pm & 6pm
WHERE: SmallWorld, Koramangala
DETAILS: boomyshow.com



Laughing Out Loud

Some comedians of Bengaluru are coming live to spread some happy vibes with laughter. Go along for great food, jokes and ambience.

WHEN: April 15, 7:30pm
WHERE: Glen's BakeHouse, Kalyan Nagar
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com



Art in Flow

Learn and use resin art to come up with your personally-designed tray that you can take home after the workshop.

WHEN: April 15, 5pm
WHERE: ArtBeat, HSR Layout
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com



FITBIT

USTRASANA BLOCKS (CAMEL POSE BLOCKS)

The most challenging part of Ustrasana (Camel Pose) is not the backbend itself but going into the pose gently to reach for the feet. So, this variation can help you get comfortable with the movement. The use of blocks acting helps to reduce fear and allows the practitioners to go gently into a backbend.

STEPS

- Start in Vajrasana (Thunderbolt Pose). Take about 4-6 breaths.
- With each breath, be aware of the chest, rib cage, and back to stay connected.
- Bring four blocks. Place two blocks one above the other, one flat and the other vertically, outside your hips.
- Place your palms on the blocks bending the elbows, fingers pointing in front. Sit up tall in Vajrasana.
- Inhale. Without pushing the blocks too much, rest your hands on them, lift up, come to a kneeling position.
- Exhale and stretch the arms and shoulders behind. Stay here for about 20-30 seconds breathing softly.
- Inhale, throw the chest out, gently drop the head back taking the shoulders behind.
- Exhale and look up. Once comfortable, inhale to go deeper into the backbend, without pushing the hips too much.
- Breathe slowly. Be aware of the front body stretch, neck, lower back, and the pressure on the knees.
- Gently release and come back to Vajrasana. Relax in Balasana. Repeat by holding the pose for a few more breaths.

BENEFITS

- Stretches and strengthens the quadriceps and knees.
- Opens the muscles around the knee cap and keeps them strong.
- Stretches shoulders, neck, and spine, strengthens chest and upper back, opening the heart centre.
- Improves flexibility and mobility of the spine, strengthening knees and ankles.
- Prepares the body for advanced kneeling poses.
- Improves functioning of the lungs.
- Can be included in yoga for teens. Professionals whose work involves more sitting can benefit from this.
- Relieves respiratory conditions, like asthma, bronchitis, or cold and allergies.
- Develops confidence and body-breath connection to follow advanced backbends in kneeling positions.
- Helps loosen up the tension in the back, neck, shoulders, and legs, relieving pain and tiredness.

LIMITATIONS

- Students suffering from injuries at the knees, lower back, hips, rib cage, spine, neck, or shoulders, have undergone recent abdominal surgery, have headaches, high BP, knee arthritis, severe lower back pain or weak back, eye or ear infection, neck or shoulder pain, vertigo, dizziness, or any condition disturbs the energy, avoid this pose.
- Students with weak knees or knee pain can place a folded mat or blanket under the knee to avoid excess pressure.

By **N Elumalai, PhD Scholar (Yoga Science)** at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

ARTCORNER



STRIDES OF PROGRESS

Made using mixed media techniques, 'Transportation' by Sushil Thakur captures the humdrum of transport amid human progress.

Bong Feast

Enjoy a Bengali Food Fest as part of Poila Boishakh celebrations. From mutton dak bunglow to gobindobhog, chaler payesh, the food fest will include authentic Bengali delicacies. Priced ₹2,199++ onwards. **WHEN:** April 15, 7pm **WHERE:** M Cafe, Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield **CALL:** 98739 72639

Crusty Bite

Enjoy some gourmet pizzas at this Deep Dish Summer Series. Inspired by the iconic flavours of Chicago, Nomad Pizza's Deep Dish Pizzas feature a thick, hearty crust generously loaded with mozzarella cheese and savoury tomato sauce.

WHEN: April 15, 11 am
WHERE: Nomad Pizza, Indiranagar
CALL: 96322 45831



Untold Story

The film *Saga of Poet* shows the life and work of Tamil writer and poet Subramania Bharathi. It has been shot in present-day Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

WHEN: April 15, 6:30pm
WHERE: Bangalore International Centre, Domlur **DETAILS:** bangaloreinternationalcentre.org

Meditation and Music

This workshop will give you a mindful meditation, introduction to music therapy and group drumming, songwriting and structured music listening.

WHEN: April 15, 8am **WHERE:** OxyVolve, Sarjapur Main Road
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

THE NEWEST SUV FROM MAHINDRA

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, India's leading SUV manufacturer, unveiled the name of its much-anticipated SUV – XUV 3XO (pronounced as XUV-three-ex-oh). Promising a thrilling performance, cutting-edge technology, unmissable design and safety, the XUV 3XO is built to surpass aspirations of the modern urban customers, the automaker says. It will be manufactured at the company's manufacturing facility in Nashik, Maharashtra.



HYUNDAI WINS GLOBAL AWARD

Hyundai Motor Group has continued its winning streak at the World Car Awards with Kia EV9 being named the 2024 World Car of the Year. Hyundai IONIQ 5 N took the 2024 World Performance Car title. It is the fourth World Car Award win for the IONIQ 5 lineup in the last three years. So far, the group has won a total of 12 World Car Awards, including back-to-back triple wins with IONIQ 5 and IONIQ 6 in 2022 and 2023, respectively.



NEW KIA CARENS 2024

Kia, India's leading premium carmaker, announced the launch of refreshed 2024 Carens with a new six-speed 1.5 diesel manual transmission in U2 1.5 VGT engine variant. This new addition expands the trim line-up to 30 options, solidifying Carens' position as the segment leader in offering a diverse range of trims. The company introduces a brand-new colour – pewter olive, available in all models except the Carens X-Line. The new six-seater refreshed 2024 Carens price starts at ₹12,11,900 and 1.5 Diesel MT Carens at ₹12,66,900.



ŠKODA SUPERB IS BACK

Škoda Auto India has decided to bring back its Superb luxury sedan due to increased customer demand. The Superb will be available exclusively in the Laurin & Klement trim. It has a powerful 2.0 TSI EVO turbo petrol producing 140kW (190ps) and 320Nm of torque. For Indian customers, the Superb will be available exclusively with the seven-speed DSG transmission. It comes in the all-new Rosso Brunello and water world green colours along with the previously offered magic black shade. The exclusive batch of 100 Superbs will be retailed in India through the FBU route. Prices start at ₹54,00,000 (ex-showroom).



LEKSHMI C PILLAI

WHEN the Meteorological department puts the temperature at 37 degrees, most people feel the day is hotter than 40 degrees.

Such a heat wave is seen in many parts of the country. This time, the city is witnessing the highest levels of summer heat and just like us, our vehicles too need some respite.

Parking under the scorching sun, being stuck in slow-moving traffic on a sunny day, can affect cars. Exposure to intense temperatures for a long time could damage the paint, the electronics equipment and the plastic/fibre/rubber parts of the vehicle.

OVERHEATING

The rising temperature can overheat the engine. And it works extra hard to keep cool in the summer. If the coolant or radiator fluids reach

abnormally high temperatures, the engine can also overheat. The solution is to make sure coolant levels are kept adequate and appropriate.

TYRE BLOWOUTS

Another big issue affecting cars is problems with the tyres. The rapid changes in temperature due to the heat during the day and the relatively cooler nighttime can cause tyre blow-outs. One should check tyre pressure regularly and inflate them to the correct pounds per square inch for the vehicle. It is a must for safety, fuel efficiency and proper functioning. Small to mid-size vehicles typically fall in the range of 30-40PSI and vehicles with larger tyres usually will need 40-45PSI. This can be seen on the user manual and on the sticker pasted near the

driver's door:

CABIN COOLING

Always try to park the car in the shade, but when it is not possible, keep the windows slightly down to aid cross-ventilation. When parked in the sun, sticking a sun shade to the windows will also help.

A car's AC takes the most load on a hot day. So check at regular intervals.

Irrespective of how powerful your AC unit is, it takes time due to all the heat trapped in the car, especially when parked under direct sunlight. To avoid this, roll down the windows first and let



some of the heat escape. Switch to the highest fan setting for a couple of minutes and then roll up the windows.

BATTERY ISSUES

Battery works harder in hot weather, which shortens its life and reduces efficiency. Get the battery checked to find out if it's in good health.

STAY HYDRATED

Just like the car, the driver also needs to keep cool during the summer. Dehydration and heat exhaustion can impact a person's ability to drive. Staying hydrated can keep everyone alert and avoid an accident. Keep a few water bottles in a cool spot in the car so that one can always have water nearby.

PUT THE BRAKES ON HEAT

CE explains how to care for your cars during this hot and dry weather

QUICK TIPS

- Park in the shade
- Use window shades
- Replace air filters
- Monitor tyre pressure
- Check the battery
- Keep an eye on fluid/coolant levels
- Get the AC serviced
- Keep windows slightly open



The writer is a freelance auto expert who hosts TV shows and anchors the YouTube channel 'CAR KADUVA'

J S PU COLLEGE

28 Students of J S PU College, Mallathalli, Bengaluru

Have been ranked at the state level.

Keerthana K Science Subject

State Level 5th Rank

KEERTHANA K. 99%	RUTU S BHAT 98.1%	RACHANA KOTTIYAR 98%	RAMYA S. 97.8%
MONIKA C. 97.8%	CHEZHAN 97.8%	DISHA S 97.3%	HARSHINI R 97.1%
SOUJANYA PRASHU B 97.1%	ARYAN KASHYAP 97.1%	POOJA M 97%	TANISHKA U 97%
JATHIN B 97%	PRAJNA N RAO 97%	VIDYASHREE S 96.6%	ANANYA RAMESH 96.8%
RISHIK R 96.5%	CHIRAG PRASHU 96.5%	THANUSHREE S R 96%	RASHMITHA R. 96.3%
TRISHA P 95.9%	SINCHAN M S 95.8%	GANGOTRI H 95.5%	ANANYA RAO 95.5%
KUSUM C 95.3%	YOGITHA S 95.3%	KAVITHA J 95.1%	RAKSHITHA M R 95.1%

SRI ANUPAMA COMPOSITE PU & DEGREE COLLEGE

Andrahalli Main Road, Peenya 2nd Stage, Bengaluru - 560 091.

(COMMERCE) PUC TOPERS 2024

Sushmitha 93%	Shwetha G 92.67%	Sheik Fouziya 90.67%	Amrutha P 89.83%
Vedamurthy N 89.83%	Yakshitha S 83.83%	Rajamma N 79.16%	Vishwas Balaji V 73.83%

THE NEW

INDIAN

EXPRESS

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

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Kiara Advani

While date issues have led to the exclusion of Kareena Kapoor, the team is actively seeking a notable actor to join the cast

KIARA ADVANI JOINS YASH IN *TOXIC*, MARKING HER KANNADA DEBUT

A SHARADHAA

YASH'S much-talked-about film, *Toxic*, has been stirring up excitement and anticipation as it gears up to start shooting this month. With the Rocking Star in the lead role, speculations about the star-studded cast have reached a fever pitch. Directed by Geetu Mohandas and produced by KVN Productions in partnership with Monster Mind Creations, the film is poised to feature a diverse ensemble. Apart from the actors already attached to the project, reports state that Malayalam actor Shine Tom Chacko, and Nawazuddin Siddique, are also part of the cast.

However, the most recent news is the inclusion of Bollywood actor Kiara Advani, who is set to star alongside Yash in *Toxic*, which is currently scheduled to be released in multiple languages. Predominantly known for her work in Hindi cinema, Kiara has also worked in Telugu films. Now, she is all set to enter the Kannada film industry with *Toxic*. Earlier, while looking for roles beyond their usual sphere, actors from the Hindi film scene tended to lean towards Telugu and Tamil productions. However, the recent trend has seen a number of actors from diverse backgrounds making their mark in the Kannada film industry, owing to the rise in popularity of Kannada films.

While rumours had suggested Kareena Kapoor's involvement in the project, recent developments indicate that the actor has left the project due to scheduling conflicts. The actor, who recently starred in *Crew*, is currently filming for *Singham Again*. The makers are actively seeking a notable actor and plan to make an official announcement soon regarding the rest of the cast. On the technical front, *Toxic* will have Jeremy Stack scoring the music and Rajeev Ravi handling the cinematography.



Yash

Samarjit Lankesh croons for his debut, *Gauri*

Actor will be showcasing his singing talent in his father Indrajit Lankesh's directorial venture. He will lend his voice for the unplugged version of the hit song *Hudugi Hudugi* from *Aishwarya*

CE FEATURES

SAMARJIT Lankesh, stepping into the limelight in his father Indrajit Lankesh's directorial venture, *Gauri*, is not just making his debut as an actor but also unveiling his singing talent right in his first film. Interestingly, the newcomer has lent his voice to the unplugged rendition of the chartbuster *Hudugi Hudugi* from the hit film *Aishwarya* (2006), which was directed by Indrajit, starred Upenendra, and marked the debut of Deepika Padukone.

Originally sung by Kunal Ganjawala with music composed by Rajesh Ramanath, this track sparked a huge trend on Instagram recently, and now the lively tune is set to be rejuvenated by Samar-

jit's vocals in *Gauri*. With the film's music orchestrated by Jassie Gift, Chandan Shetty, Shivu Bergi, and a newcomer, Indrajit Lankesh aims to craft a memorable album for *Gauri* by bringing together noted singers like Javed Ali, Kailash Kher, and Ananya Bhat to lend their voices to various tracks.

Apart from Samarjit's role in *Gauri*, which is based on real-life events, the film serves as a launchpad for Sanya Iyer, a popular face in the television serial circuit. Joining her is Miss Teen Universe Sweezal, marking her feature film debut, alongside Chandu Gowda, and others. *Gauri* will have stunt sequences choreographed by Ravi Verma and cinematography by AJ Shetty.



Samarjit Lankesh



Aditya, Ranjani Raghavan's *Kangaroo* gets a release date

CE FEATURES

THE makers of *Kangaroo*, starring Aditya and Ranjani Raghavan, have announced that the film is all set to release on May 3. The film, directed by Kishore Megalamane, has six friends coming together to produce it, under the banner of Arohi Productions. Channa Keshava BC,

speaking on behalf of the six producers, says, "As small-scale industrialists, cinema is a new venture for us. After hearing the story from Director Kishore, we decided to produce the film. Lead actor Aditya and the entire film crew's cooperation has been crucial."

Director Kishore Megalamane, who has also written the screenplay and dialogues, described the film as a suspense

thriller with a family-oriented approach. "While Kannada cinema has seen many suspense thrillers, ours stands out for its family-friendly appeal. *Kangaroo*, known for its gentle nature, becomes fierce when its offspring are threatened, this is the essence of our story. Apart from Kannada, the film will also be released in other languages. The film has music by Sadhukokila and cinematogra-

phy by Uday Leela," he says. Speaking about *Kangaroo*, Aditya says, "Director Kishore shared the story, and I immediately agreed. I portray a police officer, and the film has turned out well." *Kangaroo* marks Ranjani Raghavan's 5th venture, where she plays a psychiatrist. The film also stars Nagendra Aras, Ashwin Hassan, Shubhalakshmi, and Gowtham in pivotal roles.



Param, Moksha Kushal, Dhananjay and Ramesh Indira

I want all to discover the 'Kotee' in you: Dhananjay

The actor and debut director Param speak at the teaser launch as they announce June 14 release date

CE FEATURES

WE had earlier reported on Param, who is making his directorial debut with *Kotee*, starring Daali Dhananjay.

This was officially revealed along with an interesting poster with the actor's face partially covered in ₹ 500 notes, heightening the anticipation about the film. Now, the makers of the thriller drama have dropped a teaser of the film. The little over a minute glimpse video teases the plot of the film, which revolves around Daali Dhananjay's titular character, a young man named *Kotee*, which translates to 'a crore' in Kannada. The video ends with Dhananjay wrapped in a gunny bag and a piece of white paper pasted on his bruised face scrawled in Kannada, translating to a balance of ₹ 31 lakhs.

Kotee, a sincere and upright young man, takes a tumultuous turn as he grapples with the harsh reality that achieving a crore through legitimate means is no easy feat. This revelation hits hard when he encounters the antagonist, portrayed by Ramesh Indira.

Kotee marks the first Kannada production venture of Jio Studios.

Excited about his role, Dhananjay says, "People think that if they can get a crore rupee, they can feel settled in life. Our man *Kotee* thinks so too. You can find a *Kotee* in every home, every family, and it could be a brother or a son. Such people think that by earning so much, they can solve their problems, and live happily ever after. But the fun part of life is that there is a *Kotee* in each one of us. Playing the role enabled me to explore the layers of *Kotee* hidden deep inside me, and now I want all to discover the 'Kotee' in you."

Param commenting on his debut as a filmmaker, said, "It's an indescribable feeling to see my vision come to life on the silver screen with *Kotee*. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Jio Studios and

Jyoti Deshpande for believing in my story and giving me the wings to soar. Their unwavering commitment towards nurturing storytellers is not just about making films; it is about growing content, amplifying diverse voices, and shaping narratives. As Jio Studios continues to expand its footprints, we hope to recreate a similar success story in Kannada cinema as well."

Apart from Dhananjay and Ramesh Indira, *Kotee* marks the debut of Moksha Kushal, as the female lead. The film also consists of actors Rangayana Raghu, Tara, Prithvi Shamanuru, Sardar Satya, and Tanuja Venkatesh in prominent roles.

Vasuki Vaibhav has composed five songs in *Kotee*, three of which have been written by Yogaraj Bhat and one by Vasuki himself. Nobin Paul (*777 Charlie*) has worked on the background score, and editing is taken care of by Prateek Shetty (*Kantara*). Arun Brahman has handled the cinematography of the film. With the makers currently in post-production, *Kotee* is all set to hit theaters on June 14.



Jyoti Deshpande

A still from the film

